

inside SOCCER

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MARCONI added a touch of depth to its squad late last week when they announced the signing of Robbie Hooker.

The former Socceroo defender is known in the

game as 'Happy' and he made coach Frank Farina smile when he signed on the dotted line, even more so after the Bossley Park club had lost out to Northern Spirit in the race for Matthew Bingley.



THE player drain continues this week with the news that Melbourne Knights brilliant youngster Tom Pondeljak is off to Europe where he hopes to pursue a full-time career in soccer.

Until the game embraces full time professionalism the drain will continue and now over a dozen of our best youngsters have left for Europe since the start of the 1998/99 Ericsson Cup season.

HAPPY HAS SIGNED

TOMMY IS GOING

AT LAST!



Jimmy Mackay



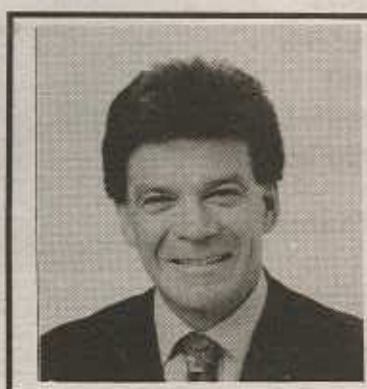
Ottie Abonyi



Manfred Schaefer



Rale Rasic



Johnny Warren

IT HAS TAKEN 25 years but finally Australian soccer will stand up and give formal and official recognition to the stars of 1974.

A quarter of a century ago Australia flew to Germany for its as-yet only ever appearance in a World Cup finals.

Paid a pittance and shunned by soccer authorities almost totally

since, the red carpet treatment will be laid down this Sunday when Soccer Australia inducts the ENTIRE travelling party into its inaugural Soccer Hall of Fame.

In a game which has been ripped asunder in recent years by internal fighting this single step of recognition will heal more wounds than any other single act.

By BRUCE CAMPBELL

In a word it is BRILLIANT.

A few years ago I was told by a then-prominent Soccer Australia official that they wouldn't recognise the magnificence of our '74 heroes because World Cup coach Rale Rasic wasn't a popular figure with the hierarchy.

Chairman David Hill took the first step in righting a tragic injustice when he paraded the '74 Socceroos before the Iran match in 1997.

Now new chairman Basil Scarsella has taken it a stage further and given our most successful ever team the ultimate

recognition by installing them as inaugural inductees into Soccer's Hall of Fame which will be unveiled at a star-studded bash at the Wentworth Hotel in Sydney this Sunday.

Inside Soccer salutes those heroes - but it also acknowledges the mar-

vellous gesture by our game's administrators.

"I'm touched," one of our greatest ever players told me when he received his invitation.

"It is always good to meet up with the boys - it has only happened twice so far, so this will be a memorable day."

Sadly, the late Jimmy Mackay will not be there. The stylish Scot rock-

eted the Aussies to a place in the sun with a brilliant thunderbolt against South Korea but he died last year following a heart attack.

Now his memory will live on, finally recognised by the game's ruling body.

A few tears will be shed on Sunday but the red carpet has been rolled out - at last.

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* CONDITIONS APPLY

Commitment to regional soccer development

By TONY MOFFITT

MAINTAINING a commitment to regional soccer at the youth level, Northern New South Wales Federation coaching staff will today (Feb 23) fly out for Tamworth to conduct a series of intensive training sessions.

Coaching and Development officers for the Federation, Bruce Tracey and Tracy Baker will conduct the coaching and development sessions in the North West District Soccer Association.

Tracy Baker recently played in the Australian Youth Team against the Netherlands.

The North West ITC squads will train with Baker and Tracey at Federation Park, Tamworth this evening. Tomorrow and Thursday have been set aside for school coaching sessions which are being held for our Lady of the Rosary College.

Federation Park will also be the venue.

Tomorrow afternoon the training time will be turned over to improving the skills of Government schoolgirls.

During the tour of the region, Baker and Tracey have also scheduled a session with The North West DSA representative coaches.

In a busy three-day agenda, Thursday night has been set aside for training sessions with the North West 14, 15 and 16 representative teams.

The sessions have been organised at the request of Mr David Coupland, from Our Lady of the Rosary College.

They follow last season's visit to the region which was rated as highly successful.

"There was about fifty girls involved last year from Tamworth and surrounding areas and following the visit the girls competition was formed, so we will be keen to see how the standard has progressed," Bruce Tracey said.

It's sixteen for next season

By Alan Clark

SOCCER Australia Chairman Basil Scarsella promised to retain all 15 existing Ericsson Cup clubs for season 1999/2000, increasing the competition to 16 with the addition of one, as yet undecided, expansion side.

Mr Scarsella announced that no existing club will be dumped from the league for next season at the recent Annual General Meeting of the Australian Soccer Media Association, Victorian Branch.

He said the only reason any club would not be included is if the club itself decided to withdraw.

In the event a club did withdraw, the competition would still look to involve sixteen teams and so allow the opportunity for the entry of another team.

Regardless of how many new teams were admitted, there would be a joining fee of around \$500,000 as a minimum.

According to Mr Scarsella, this fee would not apply to existing

Scarsella lays rumour of reduced league to rest - and promotion and relegation is on its way too

clubs continuing their membership, unless ownership changed as in the recent case of Carlton.

The fee would also apply in these cases, Mr Scarsella told the media.

When asked about plans for a promotion and relegation system affecting the national league, Mr Scarsella said he prefers that such a system exist, but would not proceed to introduce one until he was satisfied that the formula for identifying the relegated and promoted clubs was appropriate.

He said that although there is such a system currently, he was not satisfied that it was the right one, and the fact that it had not been used for many years was an indication it lacked support.

Mr Scarsella reaffirmed that a national coach would not be appointed until later in 1999.

The Media Association awarded their annual prize for excellence in football administration to Carlton General Manager Lou Sticca in recognition of his efforts to ensure

the successful genesis of Carlton - which reached the Grand Final in its inaugural season last year - and his steering of the club through its new ownership over recent weeks.

Ms Mary Pirchin on behalf of South Melbourne donated a \$1,000 cheque to the Laurie Schwab Fellowship, set up to honour the work of the renowned late football writer for *The Age* and editor of the esteemed but now defunct *Soccer Action* who died suddenly in 1997.

The donation follows an agreement that the winner of last year's Grand Final between the two Melbourne clubs that the winning GM would make that donation.

An annual match takes place between two of the late Laurie Schwab's favourite teams - South Melbourne and Melbourne Knights - which also helps fund the Fellowship.

FOOTNOTE: Soccer Australia will hold its AGM next Sunday, 28 February.

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Hodgson in talks with Scarsella, Mitchell is the people's favourite

By Bruce Campbell & Paul Millar

ROY Hodgson has become the raging hot favourite for the Soccerroo coaching vacancy after arriving in Australia last week.

Soccer Australia chairman Basil Scarsella made it clear that the much travelled Englishman was only a contender and there was plenty of opposition locally.

"I plan to talk to him in, but it's premature to say that I'll offer him the job," Scarsella said.

In fact Scarsella stressed that Frank Farina, Eddie Krncevic, Dave Mitchell and several other Ericsson Cup coaches would be asked to stake their claims for

the position.

"Not for one moment have I discounted the appointment of an Australian coach," he told *Inside Soccer*.

However he conceded that Hodgson did have the credentials and history.

The 51-year-old coached Inter Milan to a UEFA Cup final, won five consecutive league titles with Malmo and coached the Swiss national side for four years.

"He'd be a person obviously eminently qualified to do the job," Scarsella said.

Hodgson, whose last coaching job was Blackburn Rovers, is in Australia to conduct a series of coaching seminars and is also a presenter at the

World Congress of Science in Football in Sydney.

Soccer Australia has refused to be rushed on the appointment of a replacement for Terry Venables, who also missed out on the England job - with Kevin Keegan taking the reins at least until June.

Meanwhile, calls for Sydney United coach Dave Mitchell to be involved in the new set-up are increasing.

Mitchell, who has performed miracles at United, is now the clear favourite with Australia's soccer public.

Coincidentally it looks like Mitchell could well be on the dole come the end of May with the increasing likelihood that Sydney United will be unable to continue in the Ericsson Cup.

That would make the former international striker an ideal call-up for at least some role with the Soccerroos.

If Soccer Australia fails to include a locally-based coach in the set-up then



there is the danger of a message being sent that there is no future in club coaching in this country.

Scarsella is sure to address that question in his thinking over the next few weeks.

SHOULD ROY HODGSON BE NAMED AUSTRALIA'S NEXT COACH?

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NAME the last FOUR Soccerroo coaches.

ANSWER: see Ram Scoreboard, p30.

Parramatta bid still not on the table

By Derek Royal

ERICSSON Cup general manager Stefan Kamasz believes that the establishment of a new Parramatta-based national league club would be a positive move for the game in Australia.

"The team would represent an area of Sydney rather than one particular community group and as we've seen by the success of Perth Glory and Northern Spirit, who represent the whole community, that's an advantage," said Kamasz.

"It's important that a new team has as broad a support base as possible and that would be more possible with a team coming in from Parramatta."

But while Kamasz and Soccer Australia chief executive David Woolley have discussed the possibilities with Parramatta Leagues supremo Denis Fitzgerald and former Labor Federal government minister Gary Punch, Soccer Australia has yet to receive an official proposal.

"The meeting was in-

teresting and the commitment by Parramatta Leagues Club to put considerable sums of money into the sport was interesting," said Kamasz, "but until we see the bid document it's premature to comment on how good the bid actually is."

Fitzgerald officially announced plans to apply for inclusion into the league in partnership with Punch and state league club Parramatta Eagles last month.

The team will play at Parramatta Stadium and Fitzgerald said his club was prepared to underwrite the venture to the tune of \$500,000 a year for three years.

Soccer Australia regulations stipulate that new clubs must pay a licence fee of a quarter of a million dollars and a bank guarantee in favour of the national body for the same amount.

"Any new club coming into the league is going to have to demonstrate to Soccer Australia that they're adequately capitalised," said Kamasz.

"By that, clubs need between three to five

million dollars to start off in this league and to sustain the early losses, set-up costs, etc."

NSW Minister for Sport and Recreation Gabrielle Harrison fully endorses the Parramatta bid.

"This proposal has my strong support," Ms Harrison told *Inside Soccer*.

"Parramatta Leagues Club has been actively involved with Parramatta Eagles for a number of years and has established quite a deal of credibility within the sport.

"It would also encourage our local players to aspire to represent their district in another high profile sport and, importantly, fit well within the Soccer Australia philosophy of establishing teams with a strong regional identity."

Players such as former Socceroo Matthew Bingley, Marconi captain Brad Maloney, Wollongong's Robbie Stanton and goal-scoring ace David Searle, who is currently playing in England, were all brought up within a stone's throw of



Gabrielle Harrison: throwing in her support for Parramatta bid

Parramatta Stadium, area. demonstrating the tremendous potential in the

Harrison also announced that the NSW government approved an increase in the seating capacity of Parramatta

Stadium from 20,000 to 25,000.

"This is great news for stadium patrons," she said.

"This approval will give a tremendous boost to the proposal to enter a Parramatta-based team into the national soccer competition."

Parramatta Stadium would certainly be one of the best facilities in soccer and the proposed club has the potential to outstrip Northern Spirit in terms of crowd support - provided the newcomers are marketed as well as the Sydney northside club.

The state government has also indicated that in the long term, the capacity of the stadium could be increased to 35,000, making it an invaluable resource for the code in Australia.

The financial stability of Parramatta Leagues Club and the organisation's experience of running a football club, aligned with the soccer expertise of the Parramatta Eagles, could prove to be a successful combination.

World Cup referee dies; the '66 legend lives on

By Gennady Fyodorov in Moscow

NIKOLAI Latyshev, the man who disclosed two jars of Russian caviar may have helped England win the 1966 World Cup, has died in Moscow aged 85.

A spokesman for the Russian Football Union said on Thursday the Soviet-era World Cup referee had died in hospital late on Wednesday after being taken ill that evening.

Latyshev is best remembered for refereeing the 1962 World Cup final in Chile and for his recollections of the 1966 World Cup in England.

Last month in an interview Latyshev revealed how caviar may have changed the out-

come of the 1966 final in which England beat the former West Germany 4-2.

In that game, Soviet linesman Tofik Bakhranov convinced Swiss referee Gottfried Dienst that Geoff Hurst's controversial third goal, which crashed down off the bar, had crossed the goal line before bouncing out.

The arguments have raged ever since and followed Bakhranov, who died in 1993, and Dienst, who died last June, to their graves.

Latyshev recalled how Bakhranov lobbied to get the job on the line with the help of two jars of caviar, a great delicacy.

"He wanted very much to officiate in a World Cup final and came to me for help," said

Latyshev, who was on the 1966 referee selection panel.

"As we were from the same country, I didn't think I could lobby for him.

"So I told him to ask someone else," he said.

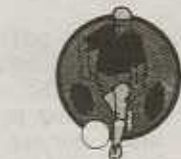
"There was a man from Malaysia on the committee and Bakhranov went to him," the former referee said.

"As far as I remember, two jars of Russian caviar did the trick."

The Malaysian official, Koe Ewe Teik, also died some years ago, so it will never truly be determined what happened, just as it will never be known for sure if Hurst's shot was in or out.

Latyshev is survived by a son, a daughter and their three children.

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AUSTRALIA'S BEST SELLING SOCCER PUBLICATION

Inside Soccer PAGE 3



Bruce Campbell

IT'S ONLY AN OPINION

SOME people mistakenly imagine that all news stories are generated by paparazzi hiding in bushes and behind telephone boxes.

The truth, sadly, is far less glamorous than that.

I'll preface that by saying that ALL news is created by, at least in our case of reference, soccer clubs.

That could be players, it could be officials (and it often is) or it could be an incident at a game.

I go to pains to point that out because the press does not make the news, it just reports it.

And while some clubs just sand by in the slow lane others move up a gear and help to generate the news by way of press release.

Press releases are certainly not the be-all and end-all of life in a newspaper office, but they sure help.

Often a good release gives us a lead to what becomes a top story.

In other cases it lets us inform you, our valued reader, what is happening at a particular club; who has been signed, what the score was and so on.

So stand up and take a bow Shane Johnson of Newcastle Breakers.

Shane produces more press releases for the Breakers than any other club.

For the record we get regular releases from Marconi also and they are good too.

We also get supplied regular information from Carlton but rarely get a release relative to news.

Occasionally we get something from the Wolves, Adelaide City and similarly from Olympic.

From the others we get nothing, nix, zilcho, diddly squat.

I can only presume that their press officers are far too busy to send out press releases.

I know that this column is well read in the halls of football politicians and I am just as certain that this remark will stir up some action.

Good, because if I was paying a press officer who couldn't get off his/her lazy backside to send a soccer publication a regular press release then I would give them the shove.

By the way, press releases from Soccer Australia are tops.

In the last year or so the amount of information emanating from Paddington is increasing.

I'll let you know shortly just how the state associations fare but already in the running for the tops award is Otto Bader from Illawarra Soccer Association.

Maybe the 'non-regionals' really do think that we live in bushes at the back of their offices.

Hmmm. Interesting.

I've been bombarded recently by

calls about the ticket prices for the FIFA All Stars match in June.

I have to report that not one of my callers had a kindly word to say about the prices.

Well, bollocks to you all.

I get so fed up with the constant whining in Australian soccer.

You don't like the price, you don't like the name, you don't like the coach.

Surely, it is time some people bloody well grew up.

If you don't want to pay \$200 then just don't go - but don't waste my time by slobbering about it.

After all what the hell can I do?

Why should I write an editorial about the money-grabbing parasites who are jumping onto the bandwagon called soccer and stripping it of every vestige of profit?

Why should I even complain about the clubs who are only intent on flogging off players to Europe?

Why should I bother that these clubs are starting to serve up what is fast becoming a third-rate product?

MAYBE the most ludicrous press release I received during the week was from Wollongong Wolves who boasted about becoming 'importers' of talent by landing the two Tahitians you'll read about elsewhere in *Inside Soccer*.

TAHITI - wasn't that the country that the Aussies hammered by some ridiculous score, so big I can't even be bothered to look it up.

I know how difficult it was for the Canberra Cosmos to convince the ASF that Gordon Hunter should get a visa - and he had played nearly 400 games in the Scottish Premier League as well as playing for Scotland at Under 21 level.

I know because I was the one who had to prepare the document which would convince Paddington.

Tahiti? Come on, Nick, you've got to be joking - if those two lads get a visa then the game has really slipped back to third rate level, I just hope that the powers that be aren't as daft.

STILL on press releases (why not ride a good thing all the way to the wining post?).

What about the Ericsson Cup club which sent out a media release to announce it had beaten a State League division one club 11-0 in a trial game?

Was there any covert reason why they didn't tell the press about the game - BEFORE it was played?

But maybe that's not a bad idea - don't tell us about any games, just send the scores in - it'll save a lot of money and effort.

White Knights
SOCCER supporters often need continual information to keep them up to date in the national league. In Australia it is sparse, except for two papers, ABSW and *Inside Soccer*.

The first has been around for many years, it doesn't focus enough on the real stories that happen week to week and mainly runs player profiles or stories from the four Diegos (what crap).

Hats off to *Inside Soccer* for a 10 out of 10 paper.

If the current trends continue the white knights of Olympic are throwing large sums of money away.

How can they run a semi professional club with crowds averaging under five thousand?

Their biggest crowd this season was against Spirit due to fact that there was around three thousand travelling supporters. The majority of them crammed into one end behind the goals.

Atmosphere was in my opinion the best this season (at a Spirit match) including the Perth Glory and Marconi games.

The songs ranged from its "just like watching - just like watching Brazil" to "Does your mother wax her back", that tune goes even better when you are only a couple of metres away from George Bouhoutos.

On many occasions there would be Greek families walking into Belmore with the adults wearing their Greek colours and their children carrying Northern Spirit flags and wearing the playing strips.

Is Olympic fair dinkum, what hope have they got of attracting new supporters if they can't even attract supporters of Greek parentage?

Will their sponsorship be ethnic-based in the years to come as their main sponsor was signed prior to Spirit, or will they disappear like the other clubs around them eg. Melbourne Knights, Gippsland, Sydney United and Adelaide Sharks?

Your WRITE

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All correspondence must include your name and address - although we will print letters under nom-de-plumes.

Letters on any football related subject are welcome but should reach us by Friday morning prior to print to reach the next deadline.

And does John Taylor (the Sydney *Telegraph's* soccer writer) have a protected interest for Olympic and Sydney United or is he a closet supporter who doesn't attend games?

Either that or he doesn't report crowd trouble at their home games, just Northern Spirit and I might add that they were the ethnic travelling supporters from the other clubs lighting flares, entering the playing field, throwing objects at the opposition supporters (note that was only at Edensor Park not Olympic).

Well done John Taylor, I see you're always up to date on your facts.

Darren Hughes
E-mail
(Ah well, Darren you can't please everybody all of the time.)

Spirit has surely woken the massive soccer potential in Sydney out of its coma - and it's great.

I have personally sat beside JT at a recent Spirit game and heard him say just how brilliant

he thinks the club is for the game.

But, like every decent journo, he has to try and present his copy in a non-biased fashion.

I'd have ten bucks on with you though that his son is a Spirit fan too, like most of the youngsters in Sydney. - Ed).

Rotten Sharks
CONGRATULATIONS on your comments and article in the 9 and 16 February issues of this great publication regarding the Adelaide Sharks fiasco.

I'm impressed to see someone is prepared to speak out and report on the shonky treatment given out by the so-called owner of the Sharks.

Here (Con Makris) is a

person who boasts to the media about how wealthy he is and his vision for the club. What a great con.

Behind the scenes he does not demonstrate his sincerity as other shareholders, coaching staff, players and supporters suffer.

I have just returned from Adelaide where I spent time with Manfred Schaefer and some players to be horrified with the treatment they are getting from this person.

Right from the start players had to wait for up to four weeks for payments.

Manfred had to argue and fight with him (Makris) all the time to make sure players received their money resulting in his sacking for being loyal and having a concern for his players.

Manfred still has the support from the Sharks football supporters including some players which was evident when he visited Hindmarsh Stadium for the Perth Glory game.

Everyone came up to him and shook his hand and asked him to come back while Adrian Santrac, the stand-in coach, was boo-ed off the field as it was quite obvious that under his leadership the team lacks direction.

I fail to understand why the SASF and SA or the Players Union do not take action against such behaviour and protect the players.

I had a spare flight ticket to Sydney for their leading player as he was totally cheesed off.

The Union advised against him using it because of a technicality.

What rot! Players contracts were broken by the owner due to non-payments, disclosure of financial arrangements etc. and the Union can not act.

This proves again Australian Soccer is still in the dark ages and while we have incompetent people in charge things will never improve.

Ted Lange
Kellyville NSW

(I am sure that this particular story isn't in its final chapter yet.)

It is difficult to comment on the Player's Union situation without knowing what action the players have taken to help themselves.

Unless they have formally, and in writing, requested that their back monies be paid then the contract is not breached.

This is perhaps the

technicality that you were advised off.

But it still sucks. - Ed).

Brazilian Magic

I HAVE just read the article entitled 'Searching for Brazilian Magic' on Alex Moreira in the 16 February issue.

What a guy! Not only is he a great guy with incredible soccer skills but he has dreams and one of his hopes for the future is to represent Australia.

I could definitely see that.

He has a lot of praise for Carlton coach Eddie Krncevic.

I enjoy watching Carlton play and with players such as Moreira, Marco Bresciano and new signing Archie Thompson in the team it has become such an excitement to watch every game.

I'll definitely be Carlton's Number 2 male supporter always.

Good luck for the rest of the season to Eddie and the team.

Ronin Chiotellis

VIC

(Carlton have been a credit to the game since they joined the league.)

With that Brazilian Magic maybe they are heading for a second finals spot. - Ed).

South Africa

AUSTRALIA plays South Africa in rugby and cricket on a regular basis. So why don't we play soccer against South Africa?

They are an ideal opponent: already a strong side and sure to develop into a formidable force in the world game over the next ten years.

It's never too late to forge strong links with South African soccer, even though it's crazy that this hasn't already been done.

Perhaps an annual trophy could be organised on a home and away basis, similar to rugby's Bledisloe Cup matches between Australia and New Zealand.

The tradition of great sporting rivalry between Australian and South Africa that already exists in other sports would be extended to soccer as well.

An annual series would create enormous public interest - certainly more than the meagre diet of meaningless friendlies which the Australian public is offered at present.

Dariusz Roman
Pahran VIC

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GOALSCORING averages exploded over the weekend.

Most rounds of the NSL produce approximately 20 goals for the seven matches.

Round 21, however, saw 30 strikes hit the back of the net.

All that occurred with the result of the Olympic v Canberra Cosmos encounter still not played as *Inside Soccer* went to press.

Cumulative crowd attendances are up by 12 to 15%.

Roll on the remaining rounds.

HARDWARE and soccer. What's the link?

According to this month's free issue of the Thrifty Link 1999 Calendar soccer is the fastest growing sporting activity in the Blacksmith's area (Northern NSW federation).

One of the most active groups in the area is the Bel-Swans Junior Soccer Club who have been holding fundraising events to help fund the club's activities.

The photo shoot for July, under the heading ON THE BALL, says it all.

And quite appropriately the players are road testing the highly popular REAL Santos 32 panel match ball, new to the REAL 1999 range and already proving a hit amongst equipment officers and retailers around the country.

If a club can contact *Wheatley's World* via our trusty editor, REAL would like to help them with your fund raising work.

FM GOES off the dial.

ABC TV Sport Floor Manager Cheryl Baker recently received what she describes as a post-match surprise.

Delivering HVS copies of the Northern Spirit v Carlton match to the home team dressing rooms, she knocked, entered and asked for the

WHEATLEY'S WORLD



TIME for *Wheatley's World* to take a regular look back in the archives to great moments from the past.

Flashback to 1992 (see picture) when the Socceroos met Sweden in a two Test series in Sydney and Adelaide.

The second match in Adelaide included six local players in the squad (Zabica, Ivanovic, Ton Vidmar, Tobin, Tapai and Steve Maxwell).

Sydney clubs were represented by three Olympic stars - Zelic, Bernal and Edwards, that is Alistair, goalscorer for the Glory over the weekend.

Marconi had only two representatives in Ian Gray and Tom McCulloch, with Jason Van Blerk from APIA providing the right back position.

Captain of the squad was Paul Wade with teammates Durakovic, Petersen and Trimboli all from the strong South Melbourne camp.

Branko Milosevic and Warren Spink were the other single club entries with Eddie Thomson and Les Scheinflug at the helm.

The results and details in next week's edition of *Wheatley's World*.

IT'S all a matter of give and take.

Hopefully the Northern Spirit press machine will devote as much time and space to criticism of the ABC as it does to meditation.

The recent complaints about live coverage of the Spirit/Carlton fixture and ensuing poor crowds should be balanced by the fact that in Round 23 the ABC will cover Spirit v Adelaide City on a Friday night in Spirit's normal time slot and replay the full 90 minutes on our regular Sunday 5pm timeslot.

Live, across the country.

I look forward to the reaction.

manager.

Three stark naked, very athletic young men (Cheryl's words) pointed her in the right direction.

Being a true professional Cheryl stuck to her task, delivered the goods and lived to tell everyone the tale.

Bookings for FM positions at future soccer matches are on the rise.

JULIE Murray does Australia and the Matilda's proud.

Former Socceroo and current Left Field Solutions director George Christopoulos reported from the recent FIFA All Stars v USA encounter that Julie trained solidly in the days leading up to the event and was unlucky not to receive a First XI jersey.

Entering the field as a substitute Julie linked up brilliantly with the prestigious company.

The Americans were far from impressed after the loss in a 'friendly'.

George also added quite interestingly that the women's game and Australia could be closer allies in the near future

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South Africa firms as World Cup host favourite

By Jeremy Lovell

SOUTH Africa is confident it will emerge as the sole African bidder to host the 2006 soccer World Cup, a move that would greatly boost its hopes of staging soccer's showcase, bid chief Danny Jordaan said on Thursday.

"My feeling is that we may only have Morocco around by April 30, and we are on our way to talk to them," he told a news conference.

Nigeria, Ghana and Egypt have also indicated a wish to host the 2006 event, but Jordaan said he expected all three to withdraw by the April 30 deadline set by CAF, the African Football Confederation, which wants a single bidder.

"We will talk to Morocco to try to settle the African question. My feeling is CAF will support us and we will get the votes of the four others," Jordaan said.

If South Africa did become the sole bidder, it should logically then get to host the World Cup because even FIFA head Sepp Blatter had said it was the continent's turn, he added.

Jordaan said South Africa met or exceeded all of the requirements laid down by FIFA for countries qualifying to enter the bidding process.

It had the necessary sports stadiums with the appropriate capacity, the airports, the telecommunications networks, the transport system, world class banking and plenty of top quality hotels.

A major boost to the national campaign came with a decision by the national and provincial Rugby Football unions to allow their grounds to be used for the World Cup soccer matches.

Not only would this mean South African soccer not having to embark on a financially crippling stadium-

building programme, but it is heavy with symbolism in the newly democratised nation.

Rugby has been traditionally dominated by the country's white minority, whereas soccer is the property of the black majority.

Opening the gates of the major rugby stadiums for soccer matches would show a strong commitment to a racially-equal South Africa and represent another nail in the coffin of the apartheid legacy.

Jordaan said he was proud that the \$10.8 million for the South African bid process had all been raised from local business, with not one cent of money from government.

By contrast the main competing bids from Germany and England had substantial quantities of state funding, he said.

He admitted that South Africa had a problem with crime, but said the



1996, England and all that. It doesn't look like the Old Dart will get the 2006 World Cup at this stage

government was starting to tackle it and he was confident it would be under control by 2006.

He also noted that Britain and Germany had their own urban crime problems as well as a fair

number of soccer hooligans - a phenomenon so far alien to South Africa. "Football is a truly

global game. Africa must have the World Cup. It is in the interests of world football," Jordaan said.

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Who is Larry?

VINCE Grella is currently enjoying life, if not Club success, with Empoli in Italy's Serie A.

Grella's team is currently bottom of the table and staring relegation to Serie B in the face - but it doesn't seem to be phasing the young Australian too much at the moment.

"This experience is unbelievably enjoyable, and to tell you the truth I'm just happy being here and everybody is treating me really well," says the 19-year-old.

"I've had an opportunity that some people would chop their arm off for.

"I've played against three of the biggest clubs in Serie A and I feel confident.

"Six months ago I was fighting to stay on the pitch for more than a week with all sorts of niggling injuries and I didn't know where I was going but since I took my chance with Empoli, I've been so happy.

"It's a little bit harder being away from home but playing against the likes of Juventus and Inter Milan, those good times take away from the bad times and I hope to stay on in Italy."

Grella has had mixed fortunes on the field - he played the second half for Empoli against Internazi-

The Prince is enjoying the good, and not so good, times in Italy's tough Serie A with Empoli.



onale in Milan recently, with the press rating him as the best on ground for

the visitors - but had to be content sitting on the bench last week, with his

team losing 3-2 to Salernitana, positioned just two spots above in 16th place.

"The whole week I felt I was looking good and played with the youth team in the Viareggio Tournament against Parma where I had a blinder and got the trophy for best on field," he says.

"All reports said I was playing extremely well but at the final training session I wasn't named in the starting eleven - that's life in Italian football."

Empoli is a town of only 55,000, situated between Florence and Pisa - but the locals come out in force to support the side.

"We're not really expected to knock off big teams because basically we're a small town playing in a big league but we're expected to fight and be competitive and it's something the fans didn't really see against Salernitana," Grella said after the match in which the fans voiced their dis-

approval.

"The team was booed off the pitch and the fans were singing a song along the lines of 'go to work' meaning instead of playing soccer go find a job or in Italian 'va lavorare'.

"I think that experience was also good for me though, because as a young person I have to learn to deal with it - one day you're the toast of the town and people are pinning labels on you - the next day well, not so good."

Grella arrived in Italy on October 15 last year, after participating in just one game for Carlton in the new Ericsson Cup season - where he came off the bench against Wollongong.

One month later he marked France '98 and Juventus hero Zinedine Zidane for half a match.

"It just goes to show what a funny game soccer is but as I said before, I'm as happy as Larry - isn't that what they always say - who is Larry?"

Bosnich ready to play



ASTON Villa's Soccerroo goalkeeper Mark Bosnich has been pencilled in to make his comeback against Coventry on February 27 - five months after injuring his shoulder against the Sky Blues at Highfield Road.

Bosnich is stepping up his rehabilitation program and the acid test will come week when he attempts to dive for the first time on the troublesome shoulder on which he had an operation in December.

"Mark is doing most of the things a goalkeeper does, like handling and collecting crosses, and everything is going along fine from that point of view," said Villa boss John Gregory.

"But the test will come

when he starts diving around and going down on the shoulder.

"Then we will see if it is capable of standing up to that sort of pressure.

"There will be a concern the first time that happens and it will be a bit scary the first time Mark does that after five months out.

"But if all goes well and the shoulder stands up to that sort of impact then I will be pencilling in the Coventry game as the time to return."

Bosnich is out of contract at the end of this season and after earlier speculation hinted that he would quit the Midlands club Bosnich has said that he is considering the possibility of life continuing at Villa.

Celtic fans are the best says Viduka; "it's good to pull on the jersey"

By Trevor Marshallsea

SOCCEROO Mark Viduka took his first step to putting the controversy surrounding his transfer to Celtic behind him last week, scoring a goal and setting up two in his debut in the Scottish club's colours.

More than two months after first arriving in Glasgow, Viduka made his first appearance for the club in its under-21s side, in a championship match against Motherwell.

The 23-year-old was allowed to play under a Scottish agreement allowing the age rules to be waived in exceptional circumstances.

And he took full advantage, slotting in a well taken goal after 12 min-

utes.

The solidly built striker went on to figure prominently in Celtic's next two goals, as the club posted a 4-2 win.

Viduka was also able to play 76 minutes, no doubt providing senior side manager Jozef Venglos with encouragement about his fitness after his long period of rest.

After all the drama and expectation surrounding his switch to Celtic, Viduka's debut was witnessed by only a handful of hardened fans who braved driving rain at the club's Barrowfield training ground.

Viduka arrived in Glasgow in early December on a \$A7.59 million transfer from Croatia Zagreb, but the purchase

has so far proved a nightmare for Celtic.

The striker took five weeks off upon arrival, to deal with "emotional stress" accumulated in Zagreb, and then sat in London for two weeks while contract negotiations between his management and the club reach a bitter stand-off.

This led to Celtic changing its mind on the payment of the transfer fee. It has tried to split the bill to pay Zagreb \$A2.3 million, Viduka his \$A3.8 million share, and his former club Melbourne Knights their \$A1.5 million.

But with Viduka's fitness still building, and with the club's strike force having been in scintillating recent form, it would surprise to see

him play a significant part in the first team over the next few weeks.

Viduka later said it felt "great" to at last play for Celtic after the dramatic transfer saga.

"It was a good feeling pulling on the jersey after all the things that have happened," he said.

"It must have been two months that I didn't play a game, so that's a long spell."

Viduka said he had come off after feeling a strain in his leg.

"But generally, I felt pretty good. I'm a little tired now but I haven't played in a long time. I'd like to get as many games as possible under my belt so I can once again get to 100 per cent on confidence and fitness."

Viduka also had a kind word for Celtic's fans, many of whom must have given up on ever seeing their expensive signing.

"The Celtic fans are among the best in the world, I think," he said.

"They've been very friendly to me and so have all the Scottish people. That's one of the big things I have noticed."

New features to commence in soccer's Number 1

NEXT week *Inside Soccer* commences a regular weekly article on legal and commercial issues as they relate to soccer.

Presenting the articles will be Greg Keenan, a practising solicitor with McCabes Lawyers, based in Sydney's CBD.

Greg is also managing director of Athletes Management International, a sports management and marketing organisation with offices in Sydney and

London.

The series is part of the continued expansion of Australia's number one selling soccer paper.

Future expansion will see yet another eight page section added and over the next few weeks coverage of regional and district leagues as well as junior soccer will also commence.

Well-known Sydney-based junior soccer writer Barry Davies is

another welcome addition to the *Inside Soccer* team and he shall commence his regular coverage of the NSW Youth and Cadet Leagues with a special preview next week.

Inside Soccer has had a meteoric rise in popularity since coming back for the 1998/99 Ericsson Cup season. Now established as the best seller in Australia, further expansions are in hand.

Aussies in Greece

ALVIN Ceccoli, on loan from Wollongong Wolves, has had a remarkably busy week with his new club AEK Athens.

Ceccoli played a full game as AEK won 3-0 at home to Panionios on Monday 8th February, came off the bench in the 57th minute as AEK lost 2-1 at home to Steaua Bucharest of Romania in a friendly later in the week and then came off the bench in the 8th minute as AEK was held to a one-all draw with Peter Lahanas' Apollon at home.

Elsewhere, Olyroo Bill Damianos came off the bench in the 87th minute as Xanthi lost 3-1 away to Olympiakos.

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inside
SOCCER

The Knights just need time

By Melina Boursinos



Kelic; prophet of future glories

AS I STARE at the images on the screen, it is difficult to remember the last time I saw such an electrifying atmosphere at one of Melbourne Knight's matches.

It is a derby clash against South Melbourne at the infamous Somers Street stadium.

The home of one of Australia's leading soccer clubs.

The stadium is jam packed and chants can be heard in the distance.

Back then, the team which has produced some of the nation's greatest players, was a force in Australian football.

A trip to the western suburbs of Melbourne was rewarded with a display of top class football from the 94/95 and 95/96 champions.

Reality check, the 1998/99 season has been one of the most turbulent in the club's history.

After last season's difficulties no one would ever dream of another nightmare run for the Croatian based club.

Guess again?

The first bombshell was that their captain Andrew Marth who had stuck by them through thick and thin, had been lured by giants Carlton.

Their bad luck continued, with the news that coach Vid Horvat was stuck on the other side of the world and would not arrive until one month before the start of the season.

All this, while they were still struggling to rebuild after the loss of some of their best players to overseas clubs.

Striker Ivan Kelic offers an inside view regarding the Knight's poor form.

He explains that the team is undergoing a

rebuilding process in which the young players need to gain experience.

"Our coach arrived only 4 weeks before the start of the season and I think the team faced too many sudden changes at once," he said.

"We have a lot of young players and kids tend to lack consistency.

"You can see it simply by our results.

"One week we are conceding stupid goals and last week we destroyed Adelaide City.

"What happens, is that when your confidence is down and you know you have to win, you find it hard to put goals away, because there is too much pressure.

"When you are an experienced player like myself, you know what is expected from you week in week out".

If the players thought they were facing problems on the field, they only had to look at the empty terraces, to see

that the situation off the field wasn't much better.

The supporters, who had once lifted the team to unbelievable heights and crowned them the Kings of Australian soccer, were slowly deserting them.

It was just last season that Tom Pondeljak admitted feeling disillusioned at the low attendances and since then not a lot has changed.

"I came around four years ago and it was a really big deal," he says.

"It was a real high for me, because I was playing with my brother and some of Australia's top players.

"Being Croatian, it was also great playing in front

of the home fans.

"Back then there was Tiatto, Viduka, Spiteri, players who represented Australia.

"More recently there are no big names, there's less hype, less crowds and it's hard.

"Sometimes I feel like I'm just playing for myself, my team mates and a few real supporters."

Captain Ante Kovacevic agrees, that the Knights' supporters were once the team's twelfth man.

However, he believes that as the results come, the faithful will return.

"Over the years the supporters have come to expect a lot," says the skipper.

"We were the team of the nineties and since then a lot of players have gone.

"I remember the supporters being much more vocal, but all I can say to them is to be patient because we are building a team for the future".

If the Knight's have a saviour, then Josip Biskic is his name.

The Australian soccer veteran and past Knight's player, came to the team's rescue when he accepted the promotion to coach midway through the season.

Not only has he given the boys a new lease of life, but more importantly it seems that they have begun playing the productive brand of football which won them back to back titles.

"I have played 14 seasons at the Knights and I have spent the best years of my life at the club," says Biskic.

"They are part of me.

"We have had many problems, including injuries and loss of players, but we are improving.

"Everybody tries their best and I tell them to always keep going and keep their heads high.

"I believe that as a unit you can do so much, so if we lose, the most important thing is that we lose as a team," explains Josip.

Ante Kovacevic is adamant that with the guidance of Josip Biskic, the club can reclaim it's past glory.

He is positive that with renewed confidence and the 'never say die attitude' the team has adopted, they will do well.



Ivan Kelic: the Knights sharpshooter has a confidence in his club's future

"I have played with Josip and he understands what the players want," he says.

"He has created a good atmosphere and improved the consistency of the team".

Olyroo keeper Joe Didulica, who rose to fame through his outstanding performances for the Knights,

echoes his team mate's viewpoint and has nothing but admiration for the Croatian-born coach.

"He has created a good team morale," says Didulica.

"He is really positive and he told us that since we can't make the six, our main aim should be to show people that we

can play".

So it seems that the critics are wrong ... the fighting spirit for which the Knights were once famous, continues to burn brightly.

The lethal strike force, unbeatable midfield and iron clad defence is still present and is preparing to attack the Ericsson Cup in the near future,

with all guns firing.

For the sake of Australian soccer, supporters, officials and players alike, will be hoping that Ivan Kelic turns out to be a prophet: "In one or two years we will be at the top again. We have talented players, it will just take time".

Hooked up with Stallions

WORLD Cup defender Robbie Hooker joined Marconi last Friday on the eve of the club's away trip to South Melbourne.

The 31-year-old Soccerroo defender Robbie Hooker has signed a short term deal which will see him play at Bossley Park until the end of the current Ericsson Cup season.

Last season Hooker played with Marconi's near-neighbours Sydney United.

Marconi coach Frank Farina said: "The signing of Robbie Hooker will strengthen our squad at what is a critical time of the season for us.

"It's no secret that we have been decimated by injuries, and a player of Robbie's pedigree will not only add value to our on field performances, but his experience will also help bring out the best in our youngsters.

"It is not often that a player of Robbie's calibre becomes available at this stage of the season, and his experience and versatility make him a valuable addition to our squad."

I trained Glory too hard: Stange

By Bruce Campbell
& Paul Millar

AFTER a mini-slump Perth Glory bounced back on the winner's track with a 6-0 win over Brisbane in Round 20 and coach Bernd Stange believes the Glory is hitting its straps at the right time.

Stange said his side had lost its way, had shown a lack of discipline and was starting to become jaded, which was partly his fault. He dropped Troy Halpin and Danny Milosevic from the starting line-up, reduced the workload at training and everything fell back into place.

"We were not a team, we were not disciplined and we were not thinking, we were running around everywhere, I took to the team with a hammer," Stange said.

The week's result against Brisbane meant that Milosevic and Halpin had to warm the bench against United as Stange refused to change a winning line-up.

The European also admitted in his first season



Perth Glory: they have got over that mid-season slump and are now on track to make an historic Top Six spot this season

in the NSL he had trained his players too hard.

Stange took advice from West Coast coach Mick Malthouse about training in the heat and realised he had been

overdoing it.

"Maybe the players were down and tired, but now I think I have it under control," he said.

"I just hope we are fit enough now."

Also missing from the Glory starting line-up was the brilliant John Markovski. His absence from the team in recent weeks might well fuel rumours that he is on the

outer at the west Australian club.

However, in official team news Markovski was listed as being injured with a calf strain.

But insiders at the club

insist that coach Stange has not been happy with the big striker's contribution in his last few matches. Stange has shown that he is not afraid of dropping even

his biggest name players.

On his day Markovski is the most lethal striker in the land and will be a key factor in Perth's push for an historic Top Six spot.

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Drubbing to act as wake up call for Strikers

By Wayne Heming

GOOD sides bounce back from bad losses and the Brisbane Strikers were faced with a huge task of character against Carlton last Sunday.

After handing out a 5-1 thrashing to Northern Spirit, the Strikers were themselves on the wrong end of a 6-0 hiding from Perth Glory in Perth in Round 20 but it was a timely wake-up call for the Strikers following a run of wins which may have led to complacency among some of the side's less experienced players.

Strikers coach John Kosmina (pictured) preferred to put the club's second biggest loss down to the Strikers' bubble bursting following five wins in six matches which had swept his side to within a point of the NSL's Top Six.

"It was a bit much to keep expecting the youngsters to back up week after week when they really aren't use to it," said Kosmina.

"I suppose I was waiting for the bubble to burst and it really exploded in Perth."

Brisbane was without captain Glenn Gwynne whose two yellow cards in Perth on top of a previous red card suspension means he will miss the next game also.





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Just glad to be back at Marconi

By Derek Royal

THEY say a week's a long time in football - how about twelve?

Marconi-Fairfield's left-sided wizard Brendan Renaud had never been absent from the action for more than a fortnight, so imagine how he felt when he was forced to sit out 12 weeks after tearing ligaments from his pelvic bone.

Renaud suffered a sharp, excruciating pain in his right groin in the round seven clash against Newcastle in November and the diagnosis demanded immediate surgery.

"I knocked a ball with my right foot and it nearly killed me," Renaud told *Inside Soccer*.

"It was like a knife - the pain was just unbelievable."

Leading surgeon Dr Neil Halpin completed the operation a week later and before long, Renaud started swimming and cycling as part of his rehabilitation programme.

But he then developed a haematoma - a blood clot - that developed into a lump and eventually burst, setting his recovery back by at least five days.

Despite the dramas, Renaud showed wonderful spirit and loyalty to his team-mates by attending every training session during his enforced lay-off.

"I believe that you should be with your team-mates unless you're laid up in hospital somewhere," he said.

"After the op I came out and went to see them on the same day. It's good for team morale if you show them you're

keen."

Renaud concedes that watching his team-mates struggle through a wretched injury crisis hurt him far more than his own misfortune.

"Sitting there week-in and week-out, watching the boys struggling and nothing going their way, made it really hard," said Renaud. "Sitting there knowing you can't do anything hurt far more than the injury."

The recent round 20 clash against lowly Canberra Cosmos marked Renaud's return to first team action and while the Stallions struggled to a 2-1 victory, Renaud was just happy to get the valuable three competition points and to come through unscathed.

"Canberra was our back-on-track sort of game," he said. "And personally, fitness-wise it ended up very well but my crosses could have been better. But after being out for so long, I was definitely happy and pulled up well."

Marconi has the luxury of six home matches from the remaining nine com-



Brendan Renaud: the utility player is back to full fitness after an horric injury

petition rounds and with players such as Dominic Longo, Mark Babic and Mike Smith due to return, and the recruitment of

former Socceroo Robbie Hooker, things are looking better out Bossley Park way.

And for Brendan Ren-

aud, he's back to where he likes being best - on the pitch helping his mates.

"The main thing is that

we get back and start fighting like we did before," he said.

"That way, we're half a chance."

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ANSWER: see Ram Scoreboard, p30.

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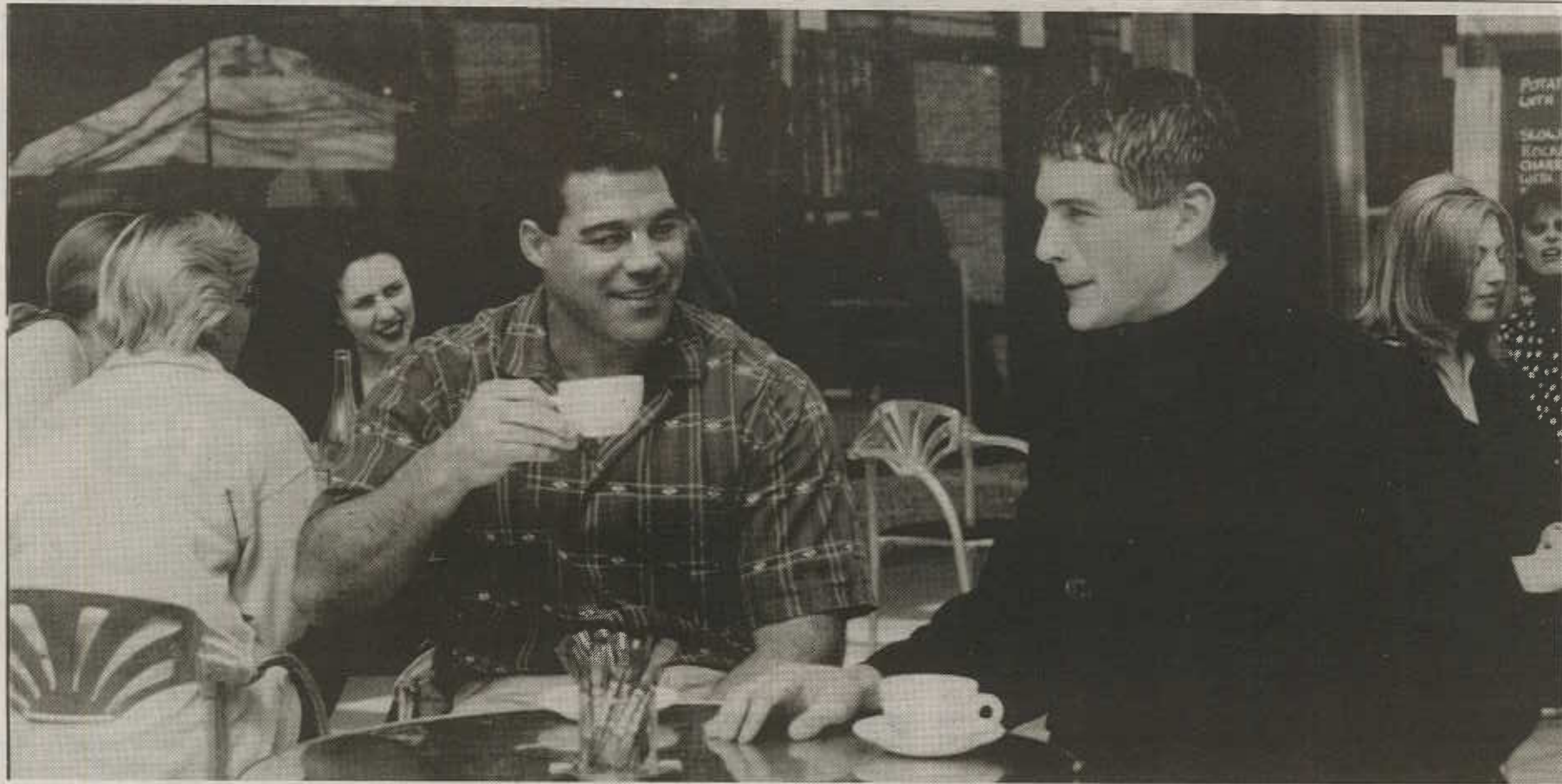
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Canberra Cosmos midfielder Ivan Zelic: flew straight from school to Sydney to play NSL with Sydney Olympic

Worth the sacrifices

by Stuart Jones

IVAN Zelic is a Canberra boy through and through. He grew up in an area that has become a fertile ground for young players.

He also learnt early on how to win so his experiences with the Canberra Cosmos are very different to what he is used to.

For a lad about to turn 22 he has also got leadership qualities that make him stand out from others.

It makes a unique player and one who's ambitions will surely be fulfilled.

Zelic's first and last junior team was Canberra Deakin.

"I played from the 7s right through to the 19s," he says.

"I played in defence the whole time apart from a season in the midfield.

"I loved junior football because we played for the fun.

"I never really thought about playing football as a career, in fact I was fairly indecisive about just what I wanted to do.

"I had thought about being a writer because I was good at English and enjoyed that.

"On the park we just kept winning and around me were the likes of my cousin (and fellow Olympic) Zeljko Susa, Joe Simunic, and Peter Buljan.

"Our results were usually 5-0 plus and by 17 I was captain of the side.

"Then Ron Smith approached me about going to the AIS.

"In year 10 I trained 5 nights a week at the AIS with the class of Mark Viduka etc.

"I lived on the other

side of Canberra so my Dad rushed home from work and I rushed home from school so he could drive me out there.

"Then in year 11 Ron took me on full time."

For any who may doubt the validity of the AIS programme they just have to look at the graduates from that year.

"We had 18 guys in total and most have gone on to play in the NSL, I think the most from any class," said Zelic.

"We had the likes of Hayden Foxe, Con Blatiss and Michael Curcija to name just three.

"That year on campus was the best year of my life.

"I learnt a lot and the coach, Ron Smith, was the best coach I have ever had.

"Tom Sermanni is perhaps the closest I have had since then.

"At the AIS I continued to know how to win and we really enjoyed our success."

After the Institute Ivan Zelic's path led him away from Canberra, for the first time, to Sydney and UTS Olympic.

"It was a tough transition," he recalls.

"It helped that Olympic were a good side as I was used to playing in a winning combination.

"Perhaps my biggest setback was the fact that I had to finish school at Lake Ginnenderra High in Canberra so that meant a flight up to Sydney on Friday afternoon to train with UTS, then hotel accommodation and a game over the weekend and a flight back to Canberra early Monday so as to be on time for my first class.

"I was just 17 and did not really know the players that well.

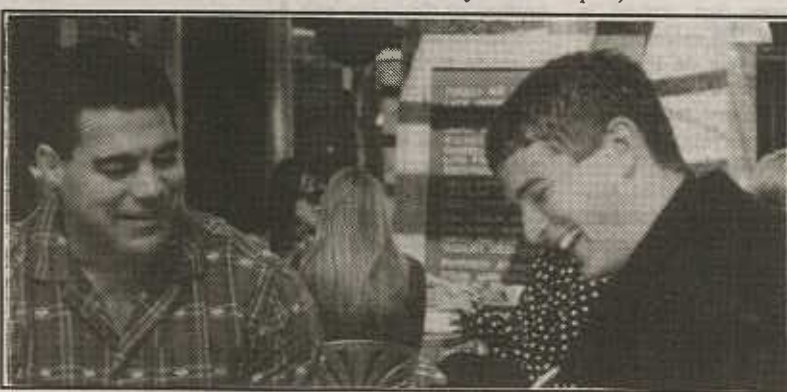
"Once I moved to Sydney, though, things improved and Abbas Saad took me under his wing and looked after me.

"I also lived quite close to Walter Ardone and he helped me a lot too.

"The supporters were always talking about results at Sydney Olympic.

"At the AIS we had always talked about how we played, the result not being the be-all and end-all; in juniors we played for fun.

"Now I had to get used to being result focused under the added sceptre of an audience only ever expecting success."



Despite having two years left on his Olympic contract, his experience soured thanks to no fault of his own.

"In the end there were some unresolved issues with my brother and the club and I felt like a pawn in between," said Ivan Zelic.

"It really got me down over the last month of my time there and forced my hand a bit.

"When I went to the World Youth Championships Branko Culina also came and he invited me

to join him at the Cosmos.

"Branko is a man and coach I really respected and still do.

"So I joined the Cosmos but after five games

in a losing side for the first time I really wondered if I had not made the worst mistake ever.

"I really started to wonder how I was going to progress as a player, however we turned things around and I started to enjoy the game.

"At the beginning of this season I wondered again if it was not another mistake.

"We kept on losing and people would not ask me how we went but how much did we lose by this

excuses rather than pushing ourselves to victory.

"Fortunately Tom Sermanni is also a winner and he instils that confidence in us that we need."

Perhaps though, Ivan should have been used to losing (despite his days at Deakin and the AIS) for when you look right back into his past you see a young boy who put proper goal posts and nets out on the back lawn, mowed that area and even painted it to look like a pitch and would then take on his brother for hours. (Perhaps if football had not worked out he could have been a grounds keeper!)

and I used that as inspiration, recalls the younger of the two Zelic brothers.

"I went on to captain my local club from under 15s to 19s.

"Then I went on to cap-

tain the Australian Youth side.

"I think the fact that I am so competitive is a big asset in leading a team.

"Others may talk about me saying why should I be involved, but to be honest at 21 I have a lot more experience than them.

"I have led the national side in youth football, have gone to South America on a number of occasions and played in the NSL for three seasons.

"The trip with the Socceroos was fabulous.

"It was a surprise but I think Raul wanted to inspire me to realise just what I had to do to make the senior squad.

"It really encouraged me to work on my game, and although the gap was not large I came out with better ideas on how to improve my game.

"So many people, especially parents of people my own age, have come up to me and said how lucky I am and that I have had all the breaks.

"What they fail to realise is the sacrifices I had to put in to make it.

"While their children were out partying I was getting driven to training five nights a week.

"I could never go out on the weekend or anything. I had to finish school and play in Sydney. When you look back you realise just how hard you were working for something that may never

Have come off so people should stop telling others they are lucky."

As for the future, well Europe is on the horizon.

"I want to play in Holland, but I don't want to

be forgotten back here," says Canberra's young man.

"I want to play first team football there all the time.

"Persistence is the key over there, look at Paul Okon he was in and out of first team in his first two seasons in Europe and then third year he was voted player of the season.

"I want to play for a decade in Europe and then come back and put something back into the Australian game.

"I also want to play for Australia as I really love this country."

Overall Ivan Zelic's future look's bright.

And yes, his brother is Ned but cut him some slack as he is his own person - and should not be seen as anything else.

To both their credit, family is very important - and then comes football.

Ivan Zelic may one day go on to captain the national side, it is not beyond the realms of possibility.

He is another who puts 100% pride into wearing the national colours.

His desire to be the best and win puts him on solid ground when it comes to paying for a decade or more into the future.

It seems like he has been around forever, yet he is not yet 21 (he started in the NSL at 17), hopefully he will be around for a lot longer to come.

Bugsy's View

with Marconi skipper Brad Maloney



THIS column was written just before I flew down to Melbourne for Marconi's game with South Melbourne, and it was interesting to read that some people considered that this game was the one which would decide whether we would make the Top Six or not.

While I can confirm that we approached the South Melbourne game in a confident manner, I think that those who labelled the fixture as a 'do or die' clash, were just a little premature.

The result of that game will be known to everyone by the time this column is read, but whether we won, lost or drew, the reality is that our championship hopes will be decided mainly by the results that we achieve at Marconi Stadium.

Prior to that game with South Melbourne we were left with 10 games remaining, but most importantly, of those 10 games, six are set down to be played at Marconi Stadium.

That home advantage is a critical factor, and if we win our remaining home games we will be in the play offs. It is really as simple as that.

Some may consider that



a big ask, but with our injury problems finally starting to subside, there is absolutely no reason why we cannot achieve that goal.

We have set ourselves a target of 44 or 45 points for the end of the season, and I'm confident that we will finish the season on a roll.

Our supporters know that we have been decimated by injuries over the past few weeks, but nobody at the club wants to use that as an excuse for us being out of the Top Six.

If I can just say one thing to the Marconi fans it's this: You have been

great when things haven't been going our way, and we want to repay you for not giving up on us, even when some sections of the press had all but written us off.

THE addition of Robbie Hooker to our squad couldn't have come at a better time for us.

Robbie is a class player, and he will give us a few extra options on the park as he can play anywhere in the back line, or in midfield.

Not many clubs are lucky enough to be able to go out and add an established international player to their squad at

this stage of the season, and I'm sure that all our young players will also benefit from having a player of Robbie's stature and experience in the team.

I'm counting on that mixture of youth and experience to drive us back in to the Top Six, starting with this coming Saturday's home game against Gippsland Falcons.

The Falcons have had a couple of excellent results recently and nobody in the Marconi camp will underestimate them, but if ever there was a game which we had to win, this is it.

Inside Soccer cadet Luke Bear talks to Sydney Olympic's Brett Emerton

Brett, how long have you been playing for Sydney Olympic? I'm now in my third season at the club.

What input does Frank Arok have on the team?

Not much, he just sits and observes at training sessions - I'm not sure what happens after that.

Sydney Olympic has one of the best striking partnerships with Adrian Cervinski and Pablo Cardozo. You must be very confident of making the Top Six?

Yes. I am very confident. Things are looking great and now with Adrian coming back (from injury) I'm even more confident. I think we'll make the Top Six easily.

Olympic's form has been very good this year - do you think the club can win the Ericsson Cup?

I think we can go all the way and win it although we've had a very up and down season. I mean one week we are the best team in Australia and the next week we are the worst.

Let's go back to 1995 around the time the World Youth Championships were on and you were in the same team as Eddie Bosnar, Luke Tomich, Christian Care, Nick Rizzo, Mike Cunico and Tynan Scope - what do you think happened to the other players in the squad who haven't made the step up to professional soccer?

Well at that young age you had to make a few decisions. You had to take into consideration school and other things like that. Fortunately the gamble I took paid off and Sydney Olym-



pic signed me.

Do you have hopes of one day captaining the Socceroos?

Yes, I think it is every player's dream to one day captain the Socceroos.

What is your view on Leeds not letting their young blokes play for Australia?

I mean, what can you say - it is a bit harsh. I don't think it is right.

How do you feel about the preparation of the Olyroos leading up to the 2000 Olympic Games?

Our form has been a bit dodgy. However, we still have lots of players coming back from overseas clubs.

Brett, you have had an excellent career so far - where do you go from here?

Everything has gone right for me so far. From here? I hope to get an overseas contract.

Returning to Oz

By Derek Royal

FORMER Parramatta Eagles striker Paul Foster is looking at returning to Australian soccer after a successful six-year stint in Singapore and Hong Kong.

The 31-year-old has been trialling with Ericsson Cup newcomer's Northern Spirit and in his first outing, grabbed two goals in a friendly match against NSW state league side Sutherland Sharks.

Spirit coach Graham Arnold has been concerned with his side's vulnerability in front of goal and a marksman of Foster's pedigree would be a handy acquisition for the club.

Foster comes home for some Spirit

In almost five seasons in Hong Kong, Foster has scored over 70 goals and has won the coveted Golden Boot award as the league's top goal-scorer for three consecutive years. He has also made several non-official representative appearances for Hong Kong.

Foster has played against the likes of Tottenham Hotspur and AC Milan, and opposed players of the calibre of Franco Baresi and Roberto Baggio.

The sharp-shooter even scored a hat-trick against Chile - the same Chilean side that defeated the Socceroos and England on a whirlwind tour.

Foster first arrived in Asia after spending almost a year on the sidelines with a cruciate ligament injury he suffered while playing for Parramatta Eagles.

His experience of Australian club football, where money was short and professionalism unheard of, convinced him

to remain in Asia, where he was able to earn a decent living out of something he loved doing - scoring goals.

But now, the older brother of Socceroo and Crystal Palace star Craig, is ready to return home after an absence of six years.

It comes as no surprise that a man accustomed to making a living from his footballing talents has been drawn to one of the most professional outfits in Australian soccer.

ran over to the Carlton bench to let Krncevic know exactly how pleased he was.

"I thought it was very ungentlemanly of him," Krncevic told Melbourne's Age newspaper.

"I don't know why he's got sour grapes - he was treated more than fairly at Carlton.

"For the money he was on last year, he produced absolutely zero. If anything, I would have been a bit embarrassed coming up against us this season. I wouldn't have been carrying on like a monkey - I'd be hiding in shame."

For his part Kresimir Marusic isn't fazed at all by his former coach's comments.

After all, Northern Spirit destroyed Carlton totally and Kresimir Marusic had an outstanding game.

And he can always point to the fact that he has played in a Grand Final in each of his three seasons in Australia - one of them with the Blues.

Who is to say that this won't be a record-making fourth with different clubs?

Ungentlemanly or not, frustrating or not he is the hottest player in the land at this moment in time.

I don't care about records: Mori

By Sam Lienert

DAMIAN Mori's world record for the fastest goal has been smashed by a Uruguayan amateur soccer player but the Adelaide City striker said he did not care.

Mori scored in 3.69 seconds for the Zebras in a national league match against Sydney United at Hindmarsh Stadium in December, 1995.

"It doesn't bother me, nobody even cared when I did it, it doesn't worry me," Mori said.

Uruguayan 22-year-old Ricardo Olivera blasted home in just 2.5 seconds in a regional championship match between the team of the coastal Uruguayan city of Fray Bentos and the nearby city of Soriano - as reported in *Inside Soccer* LAST DECEMBER.

When the referee blew his whistle for the kick-off, Olivera, rather than passing the ball to a teammate, blasted the all towards the opposing goal after noticing that

the goalkeeper was far off his line.

The spectacular shot entered a high corner of the goal and hit the back of the net, to the astonishment of fans and players alike.

FIFA's new ruling, which was not in place when Mori scored his goal, allows a goal to be scored direct from the kick-off.

Mori scored his goal after Brad Hassell rolled the ball to his right foot from the kick-off.

Olivera's historic goal happened last Boxing Day and has been recognised by FIFA as the fastest goal in soccer history.

Mori, who is the third highest goal scorer in NSL history with 121 career goals, said he was happy for Olivera and hoped the Uruguayan got more out of the world record than he had.

"It doesn't worry me, the record didn't do anything for me anyway, hopefully he makes a

million dollars out of it, I made nothing," Mori said.

The Socceroo also said his goal had been scored against quality opposition in the NSL whereas Olivera scored his goal against amateur players.

"It could have been staged for all I know, who knows, but congratulations to him, it's fantastic," he said.

Olivera told Deutsche Presse-Agentur that FIFA confirmation had been received last week and had been communicated to him by the local referees committee, which had sent a video of the match and all relevant details to the world body.

He said that the direct kick-off had been practised "just six or seven times" under the direction of team coach Mario Liuzzi when the team had its training sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

FOR THE RECORD: Mori's record still stands as the fastest goal in professional soccer.

Marusic riles former coach

By Stuart Bell

KRESIMIR Marusic has been known to upset the odd coach, the odd time - or three hundred. Undoubtedly possessed with brilliant skills, the Croatian import can exasperate by hanging onto the ball for just a touch too long, or lose his temper at a vital moment.

But the flawed genius is Australia's greatest ball-playing talent, of that there is no doubt.

And whoever becomes Australia's next coach will undoubtedly want him to pick up his wattle tree along with an Australian citizenship certificate - that is unless he heads back to Europe at the end of the season as is the current rumour.

But former coach Eddie Krncevic was the man on the end of Marusic's black side recently when after scoring a brilliant goal the Northern Spirit midfielder

The career, times & thoughts of JASON POLAK

By Alan Clark

The first question is really the key one, and we should get that one out of the way straight away, if that's all right by you. For the benefit of Inside Soccer readers, I wonder if you could tell us your views on reincarnation?

"Reincarnation?" Jason laughed and wisely declined to reply. If only Glenn Hoddle had done likewise

On his early beginnings in football.
"I started playing in Bundaberg in Queensland for the biggest team in Bundaberg called Across the Waves. "I played my first games as goalkeeper actually, but then I got a bit bored so I then went out into the field."

"Did you come from a football-playing background?" I asked.
"My father does," Jason told me, "He played at amateur level in Holland, as did his father."

"I think that's where the interest came from. So as a child I always had a football around."
(Jason had already carved out a good representative career before his first national league season.)

"I played all through the (Queensland) state representative sides from under 13s to under 19s, and then progressed to the national teams at that age."

"I played for Australia's Youth Team in the Championships in Chile, and I played my first game for the Socceroos in 1988 against Fiji."

"I ended with the Socceroos under Terry Venables - his first camp was my last camp," he said smiling a little.

What was different between that camp under Venables, and the previous ones you'd been involved in?

"There was a buzz of excitement - the fact that Terry Venables is known all over the world - all the players wanted to meet him and see what he was like."

"The interest that he attracted was extraordinary."
(I asked for Jason's assessment of Venables based on that training camp).

"He was a good coach."

"He knew what he was talking about."

"I was especially impressed by the way he got movement out of the players - he added another dimension."

"I was very impressed with him."

On Jason's first season in the na-

JASON Polak has had a long and successful football career in Australia at National League level amassing over 200 games with four clubs.

He has also been a success as an Aussie overseas playing in the Greek, Belgian, and Dutch leagues.

In only one of Jason's National League seasons has the team he's been with failed to play in the Finals, and then by only one point.

Next week Jason will play his 100th game for current Champions, and Ericsson Cup leaders, South Melbourne.

The former Socceroo talks exclusively about his career - its ups and down, its triumphs and disasters - with Inside Soccer's Alan Clark.

tional league - Sydney Olympic in 1988 (they were still playing a winter season then).

What do you remember about your debut game?

"I think I came off the bench against Sydney United."

"I remember being very nervous, but it was sort of a blur - it was very exciting."

"I enjoyed those couple of years at Sydney Olympic."

"(They were successful years," I said, checking the ladders and Finals Series' details for 1988 and 1989, Jason's second and last season with the Sydney-siders).

"Definitely."

"We had a good side - we were all around about the same age, and we all got on well and I think that contributed to our success."

"We socialised together so it was a good team atmosphere all around."

You've in fact been associated with successful NSL teams throughout your career. In only one season, has a team you've been associated with failed to make the Finals - we'll come to that team in a moment - but with Sydney Olympic you were there two years, the second year reaching the Grand Final.

(I knew this because I'd been trawling through the OzSoccer site at <http://ozsoccer.thehub.com.au/> where there's enough detail to make the most dedicated footballphile a happy person.).

I asked Jason what he remembered of the Grand Final.

"Oooh!" he said still feeling some of the disappointment, "I knew I was going overseas at that stage, so I knew it was going to be my last game in Australia, at least for a while."

"I was keen to do very well."

"The crowd was great, both teams (Olympic and Marconi) had great supporter-bases."

"By half-time, no-one really dominated the game."

"I thought we were starting to get on top, but (Marconi's) Zlatko Nastevski, who was a very dangerous

player at the time - a noted goalscorer - had been pretty quiet the whole game, and then he scored the winner."

"That was just shattering."

"We went from feeling we were going to win this game, to just hav-

ing lost it."

(There was a lull in our conversation as Jason remembered the devastating feeling).

I asked Jason about his three years overseas. Jason spent one season in Greece with Panathinaikos, then transferred to Belgian club KV Kortrijk, then crossed the border into the Netherlands to play for De Graafschap. All three clubs were in their respective countries' top leagues.

"Panathinaikos approached me and made me an offer."

"At that stage I wasn't a hundred percent about it and I had to think about it."

"But the offer was good, and I thought I was going to go (overseas eventually) anyway, so I may as well go now."

Up until that point, Jason had been - like most other players in Australia - a part-time player. He was now going to a full-time professional club, and one of Europe's giant sides as well. How did he cope with the transition from part-time to full-time?

"It was eye-opening."

"People in Australia don't realise how fierce the competition is over there for places, and that it is your job."

"It's a lot more intense, not as friendly an atmosphere as it is in Australia, because of the level that you're at."

"And I guess some days it really feels like a job."

"Because you're training every day you do get days where you think it's just a bit of a grind, especially in those winter months when you've got ice on you and you can't feel your toes because of the frozen pitches and the cold days."



The change meant Jason had undergone a major change from almost playing for fun, to playing as a job, in a new country, and a different language and custom. How did he manage?

"So there you were, an Australian

overseas in a major Greek club, not of Greek background yourself so probably not fluent in Greek, playing in Greece?"

"It was very difficult. I was an Eng-

lish-speaking person in Athens, and no-one really spoke English that much."

"The coach I was under (for part of my time there) didn't speak English either so it was quite difficult."

"I was lucky in that I had some

Australian players with me who helped translate at various stages."

"Chris Kalantzis (now returned and playing with Sydney Olympic) was there and he helped me."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

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Pondeljak jets out for Ghent

By Stuart Bell

POPULAR Melbourne Knights striker Tom Pondeljak headed for Belgium on Monday for a two week trial with a view to a permanent move. Pondeljak will trial with First Division club Ghent and is confident of making a permanent overseas move.

"A lot of Australians have played in Belgium," Pondeljak said on the eve of his departure.

"The good thing is that a lot of them have gone on to bigger and better things in the major leagues in Europe.

Pondeljak, who has performed well for the Knights during a difficult time clearly sees the move to Ghent as a 'shop-window' opportunity.

"They obviously like Australian players (in Belgium), and I don't think the transition is too difficult because the standard isn't too much higher," he says. "It's hard for someone like me to jump into the German,



Italian or English league straight away.

"A lot of Australians have come through Belgium, because they like to start their careers off there to try and get a feel for Europe."

The only step-up he is likely to see is one of fitness with Ghent having the advantage of being a

fully professional club.

His loss will be a big blow to Melbourne Knights fans who have now witnessed almost the total decimation of their successful side of just a few seasons ago.

Pondeljak played what might well have been his last game for the Knights against Spirit.

Bill Turner keeps hoping

By Tony Moffitt

IN THE week following *Inside Soccer's* report on the ailing condition of The Bill Turner Cup, lots has happened - little of it good.

Founder of the school-age competition, Bill Turner, told *Inside Soccer* last weekend that the response from the community, and from the area managers and Executive within the organisation was 'outstanding'.

"Everyone was delighted that the newspaper would take such a genuine concern in our problem, and come to our aid by publicising our predicament," Mr Turner said.

However, facts are facts.

In the ensuing days, Mr Turner said the phone hasn't run with a call from a football club.

Not that he's disappointed.

Bill Turner is made of strong stuff.

He's eternally hopeful, if not downright optimistic.

"It will happen," Mr Turner says, underlining his faith in the Australian soccer community.

"I'm hoping there are clubs out there right now who have taken the idea on board, and are going through the normal club-

committee processes.

"Every club has a budget, and every budget is tight.

"Even though we're not asking for a lot of money, we're still asking. naturally, that sort of thing needs to go before a club meeting before anything can happen.

"It's a bit hard to believe that every club in the country just happened to have their next scheduled meeting in the few

days following the story in *Inside Soccer*!

"So, we'll wait, and we'll hope.

"And we'll put our faith in clubs like Shellharbour City and the hundreds of others like it around Australia."

If the Bill Turner Cup does survive, it will need this kind of ground level support.

Last week Mr Turner was given his twenty

fourth knock-back by corporate Australia.

He's keeping count.

"Yes, we got two more last week," he admitted.

"Two more corporate organisations turned down our invitation.

"That makes a neat two-dozen.

"But I'm not finished trying.

"We've still got presentations out with two other firms.

"We're hoping they

Thomas claims the FIFA all time caps record

SWEDISH goalkeeper legend Thomas Ravelli is the world's most-capped footballer, according to a revised list issued by world governing body FIFA.

Ravelli has amassed 143 games and now ranks ahead of Saudi Arabia player Majed Abdullah (140).

Abdullah previously was listed with 149 games, but FIFA detected that some of them were in fact Olympic matches or games of the Saudis against club teams.

Under FIFA rules only regular

international matches - friendlies against other national teams or championship qualifiers can be counted.

FIFA said that several eastern European players were also stripped of some matches for similar reasons that Abdullah.

Third in the list is German veteran Lothar Matthaeus with so far 132 matches.

Matthaeus can move to the top of the list - theoretically October 9 in a European championship qualifier with Turkey - because unlike the duo ahead of him he is still playing.

Talking Soccer with Carlton S.C.'s SEAN DOUGLAS

THIS week I'll continue on with the interview with Chris Turner from the Auckland Kings.

Chris, what has been the reaction to your Ericsson Cup bid from the media, fans and sponsors so far in New Zealand?

"It has been very exciting.

"We have kept a very low key approach so far in forming the company and the bid to enter the Ericsson Cup, but we

have still had so many enquiries asking "when is it going to happen".

"People from both the soccer community and other sports have been very interested in finding out all about the club.

"Corporate support is very strong due to the television coverage and international rivalries that we will have.

"So overall, even though we haven't officially launched the club

yet there is a lot of interest in how we are going and what stage we are at."

What sort of marketing will you do? Soccer in NZ has almost no profile whatsoever, how will you change this?

"Football Kings limited will have a footballing arm and a separate marketing arm among others.

"New Zealand's recent success in the Confederations Cup, and the up-

coming World Under 17 Cup have lifted soccer's profile over the last few weeks, and we hope to build on this while we can.

"People in New Zealand love sport, and they will follow almost any sport if it affects them.

"With the trans-Tasman rivalry we hope to attract "non-soccer" followers.

"We liken ourselves to the Auckland Warriors who entered the profile of Rugby League in New Zealand solely due to the fact that they were competing against Australian sides week-in week-out."

Finally Chris, Where do you see the Auckland Kings in five years time?

"Winning the Ericsson Cup! (laughs).

"The Kings will stand for excellence on and off the field. We aim to be competitive from day one.

"And within three years we hope to be challenging for and even winning the Ericsson Cup."

It's daytime at United

By Derek Royal

HE MAY be biding his time, but Sydney United's high-profile off-season signing Nathan Day is gradually working his way back to full match fitness.

The former Adelaide Sharks striker broke a bone in his foot in October and has only recently returned to first team action.

Day has played a handful of games from the bench in recent weeks and started the round 16 clash against Newcastle at Breakers Stadium.

But the success of United's teenaged strike force of Mile Sterjovski and Joel Griffiths makes life rather challenging for the newcomer - a fact coach David Mitchell knows all too well.

"The two young boys up front are doing extremely well," Mitchell told *Inside Soccer*.

"They've had a terrific season so far, but the season is by no means over.

"Nathan Day has been waiting in the wings and now he's back to full fitness, he's pushing for a first team spot as well."

Day's respect for Mitchell influenced his decision to move from Adelaide to Edensor Park and the former Sharks star is aware of his new mentor's achievements in a distinguished professional career that included stints at Feyenoord, Glasgow Rangers and Chelsea.

"Dave's got experience, attitude, a good

reputation and influence," said Day.

Mitchell too, had high expectations of his new charge but the player's unavailability and injuries suffered by Abbas Saad and Mitchell himself, forced the United coach to use Sterjovski and Griffiths - an opportunity the youngsters have grabbed with both hands.

Saad is expected to be available for first team selection within the next month and the option of Mitchell playing himself up front either as a starter or a bench player assures the team of some white-hot competition for places. United's sensational tyros have the inside running, now it's up to the likes of Day, Saad and possibly Mitchell, to apply some pressure.

Rab attracting attention

RAB Shannon, Newcastle Breakers in-form Scottish import, is believed to have attracted the attention of several high profile Ericsson cup sides, but Shannon states that a move from Newcastle has not crossed his mind.

Said the skillful Scot: "My family have settled into the Australian way of life really well, and I'm certainly enjoying my football at the moment."

Lee Sterrey has confounded the critics and put together a very competitive side on a shoestring budget.

"We're still not out of the running for a Top Six spot and it

would be a great boost to our supporters if we could make it," says Shannon. "Apparently they haven't had too much to cheer about in the past few seasons, but they really are a loyal bunch, and deserve a bit of success. I don't think too many teams make the mistake of underestimating us now, and our blend of youth and experience is starting to pay dividends."

Shannon, who saw service in Scotland's Premier League said: "Coming to Australia was one of the best career moves I have made. I feel fitter now than at any stage of my career, and I'd like to think that I would still be playing in the Ericsson cup for another three or four seasons, preferably with Newcastle."

NSW SUPER LEAGUE: ROUND 4

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Brown fancies Tillies' chances

By Hugo Uribe

AUSTRALIAN women's soccer team coach Greg Brown is confident the Matildas will reach the semi-finals of the World Cup in the United States in June.

Brown said he was satisfied with the draw for the 32-match event that took place last week in San Jose, California, placing Australia in Group D to play China, Ghana and Sweden.

China, Germany, defending champion Norway and the host United States were the top seeds.

"Yes, I'm happy with the draw, mainly because we've beaten China and Sweden before and although we have never faced Ghana it is one of the weakest sides in the tournament," he said. Brown said if Australia won the group, he felt confident it would go on to the semi-finals.

If they win their group, the Matildas will have to play the second in Group C (Norway, Japan, Canada, Russia); if they fin-

ish second they play the top team of that group.

"I feel confident we can beat either Japan, Russia or Canada to qualify for the next stage," Brown said. "After that, anything can happen."

Norway should win the group unless there's a major upset.

Brown said China would be favourite in

side," he said.

Brown said now it was a matter of intense preparation and Australia would play "some matches against the boys" in Canberra before leaving in three weeks for Portugal for the Algarve Cup against Portugal, the United States, Norway, China, Sweden and Denmark.

warm-up matches prior to the tournament.

The coach's optimism was echoed in San Jose by prolific Matildas striker Julie Murray, who was selected for the FIFA World All-Stars which beat the United States 2-1, in an exhibition match sandwiched around the draw for the World Cup.

"We're capable of beating

"We're capable of beating any of these teams. We've come a long way."

Australia's group because of its past record in the Olympics and World Cup, and conceded it would not be an easy game for the Matildas.

"But we beat China 1-0 about 12 months ago during the Tri series between the Chinese, New Zealand and us here in Australia, and a lot has happened since in terms of improvement for our

"That should be good preparation," he said of the two-week tournament. "Obviously, we want to go there and do well, but also to have a close view of the other teams."

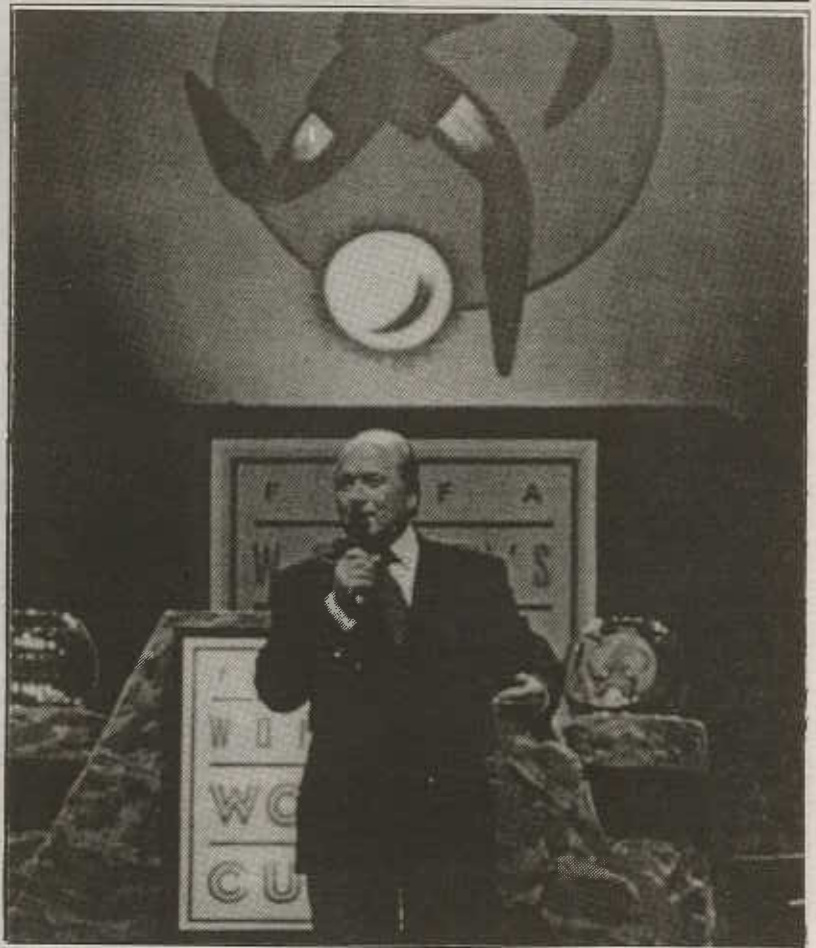
Brown said he hoped to be able to play Ghana before the World Cup and that the Matildas definitely would be facing the US and Canada in

any of these teams. We have come a long way," Murray said.

Victories over China, Sweden and Italy in the past year give Murray confidence the Aussies can overcome entering the 24-team event.

But China's Gao Hong likes her homeland's chances as well.

"There's no problem. I like the results," she said.



FIFA President Sepp Blatter at the Women's World Cup draw

Wolves looking to import Pacific islanders

By Stuart Bell

WOLLONGONG Wolves have stated their intention of becoming importers of players by bringing two Tahitian internationals to Brandon Park for trials.

Striker Gerald Quennet, 25, and midfielder Benoit Michelena, 24, arrived in Wollongong last week for a two week stint with the lowly placed NSL side.

So far this season the Wolves have transferred

striker Kosta Salapasis to Portuguese second division side Compastella and defender Alvin Ceccoli to Greece on loan.

Should AEK pick up Ceccoli's contract the club will stand to make a total profit of \$2million with the double deal.

Both Tahitians play for the island's AS Tefana club although they arrived there from France's Girondins Bordeaux club where they were developed in that club's youth

programme.

Both players attracted interest from Brisbane Strikers during the recent Confederations Cup but failed to land a contract.

"In the semi-final of the Confederations Cup against Australia, I believe we were unlucky," said Quennet.

"But it was a positive experience for both of us, and the team.

"People say that was the best Tahiti has ever played."

Tahiti lost 4-1 to an Australian experimental side which itself was eventually humbled by New Zealand in the final.

Before the Wolves can sign the players they have to demonstrate to the NSL that they have the credentials to play at a higher standard than average Australian Ericsson Cup players.

Prior to moving to Tahiti both players spent some time in the French third division.

Zebras look to Riccardo

ADELAIDE City are currently trialing an Italian midfielder at Hindmarsh Stadium.

25-year-old Riccardo Magherini is said to have impressed Zebra officials so far.

He is from Serie C2 club Prato.

And in a bid to step up local promotion the Zebras visited Elizabeth City Shopping Centre prior to last weekend's Ericsson Cup match.

Local station 92.7FM conducted their soccer programme from the

centre and featured City players live on air.

Other centre visits are planned in the future as Adelaide City continues its promotion aimed at heightened community awareness of the club as well as keeping in contact with their own fans.

ROUND 4 NSW SUPER LEAGUE

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Applicants should be aged between 14 and 18.

Four Cadets will be started in the programme which will start mid-March and run for 20 weeks. Under an agreement with Soccer Australia restricted press accreditation will be given to all successful applicants.

REPLIES TO:

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telephone
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"But I did find it difficult."

But there was also an up-side. Not only was he now with one of the pedigree sides in European football, playing in front of enthusiastic and knowledgeable fans with crowd sizes far in excess of those he had so far encountered, he was involved in European club competition.

"Panathinaikos played in Europe - I think it was the European Cup Winners' Cup, and I played ties against (Romania's) Dynamo Bucharest and (Wales') Swansea.

"That was a fantastic experience playing in European competition."

Jason left after an agent arranged a transfer to Belgian club KV Kortrijk, then in the top league.

After a year he moved on to a Dutch club also playing at elite level.

Was it easier playing in western-European countries?

"I found things much easier in Belgium and Holland."

Coming from a Dutch family-background, did you speak Dutch?

"No. My father is Dutch, but my mother is Australian, so he had no-one to speak it to, so he never spoke it with us.

"So I went to Holland not knowing any Dutch either."

I asked him about his season in Belgium.

"The team I was with was from the French-speaking part of Belgium, very close to the French border.

"Lille was the closest French town.

"Frank Farina was over there at that time playing very well for Club Bruges.

"I saw Frank every now and then and we spoke on the phone, so it was good to have other Australians around.

"Jason van Blerk and George Kul-scar were also there at that time."

Jason's move from KV Kortrijk to Dutch team De Graafschap had an Australian connection.

"The coach at De Graafschap - Simon Kistemaker - used to coach Brisbane Lions.

"When I was a junior he tried to get me to Brisbane Lions.

"(Playing at De Graafschap) was an enjoyable experience, they were based in the eastern part of Holland, close to the German border."

The Dutch league is like quite a number of European leagues where there might be three or four really strong teams which can hold their own in European competition, and then a number of other clubs below them who are around about the same standard?

"Yeah, that's exactly right.

"PSV, Ajax, and Feyenoord - they were the three big clubs, and you were doing very well to beat those sides.

"But the rest of them were very competitive with each other.

"De Graafschap were a pretty good club.

"They had a good supporter-base, they'd get over ten thousand supporters there and it was a small ground, so there was always a fantastic atmosphere."

And then you returned to Australia? Frank Farina mentions in his book 'Frank Farina - My World is Round' that he'd decided after playing overseas he wanted to come back to Australia. He wanted to return to the Australian lifestyle even though he could have continued playing and making a very good living in Europe.

What was the motivation for you?

"I couldn't get a work permit!

"Because my father (was now an Australian citizen) he'd given up his (Dutch) citizenship.

were a good enough side to have been in the Finals."

How was the change from playing in European winters to the change to summer football back home?



"So I couldn't play as a Dutch-person.

"Like any other foreigner, I had to apply for a work permit.

"That went through the courts and I ended up not getting one.

"I hadn't played enough internationals at that stage.

"It meant I couldn't play in Holland any more and it would mean going to another club.

"But I'd been away three years anyway."

So you came home to Newcastle. What was it about Newcastle that made you want to go there?

"It was the coach, Bruce Stowell.

"I knew him from my junior days in the (Queensland) state representative sides.

"He'd been in contact with me regularly and he knew that I was coming home and indicated to me that he wanted to sign me for Newcastle."

This was in season 1992/93, the national league now having gone to summer seasons during Jason's time overseas. Newcastle that year had one of their most successful seasons in a long time. They missed out on the Finals by one point.

"Yeah, we did," Jason responded ruefully.

"We started very badly.

"At the start of the season I had an operation on my foot, Warren Spink had a groin operation, we had a lot of players out of the side, and we struggled early on.

"But the second half of the year we did very well - we won eight or eleven games or something like that, but we ended up just missing out.

"It was disappointing because we were playing very well towards the end of the season, and I think we

"I enjoyed it!

"Coming from Queensland I love the sun anyway.

"I grew up playing in the warmer weather, so the change to summer for me was great.

"It didn't mean those cold wet nights (training).

"Generally the standard of the pitches was a lot better, and the crowds were better too.

"I thought it was very good for the game, very positive."

I was speaking with Jason on the Thursday before South Melbourne was due to play Marconi. This game would be Jason's 99th for South, and his 205th in the national league.

The Marconi captain, Brad Maloney whose playing stats are very similar - it would be his 108th for Marconi, and his 203rd in the league - was a team-mate of Jason's at Newcastle that year.

Knowing the article wouldn't appear until after South played Marconi, and so would not be seen by the Marconi captain until Marconi had been safely returned to Sydney, I invited Jason to spill the beans on Maloney.

The ever-polite Jason declined the offer, and instead replied: "He's a great guy, Brad.

"I got on very well with him. I only spent that year with him but I knew he was a good player.

"He played in a similar position at Newcastle (as now with Marconi) maybe not so as attacking as he does these days.

"He's come on very well over the years.

"He's become captain of Marconi, and is a very influential player, and he's scored a lot of goals.

"You've got to admire what he's done for his career.

"Brad's spent some time overseas as well, it sounds like we were both nomads there for a while, but we've finally settled down!"

I mentioned that the Marconi match would be Jason's 99th for South, and so the next game would bring up the ton, and asked him if he was aware of this aspect to the game.

"I don't normally keep a track of statistics like that.

"People did make me aware of my 200th game which I think was in Canberra.

"I didn't know until you told me it will soon be my 100th game (for South).

"But it is nice to be at one club for one hundred games."

"We'll come back to that," I suggested, "because your one hundred games with South is actually spread over two periods."

"That's right," he said with a knowing laugh.

So what took Jason to South for season 1993/94?

"Well there were a couple reasons there.

"South Melbourne expressed interest in having me and also my wife had an offer to move down here with her job.

"So from both our points of view it was a good idea, although I had enjoyed my stay at Newcastle."

South Melbourne had a very successful year, finishing second in the league, being eliminated one step from the Grand Final by eventual Premiers Adelaide City. I asked him for his recollections of that first season at

South Melbourne.

"I remember it was a very exciting year.

"I was playing with some very, very good quality players.

"I enjoyed the year immensely.

"The only disappointing thing was the way we finished because we played some very attractive football that year, and when you get to the Finals with the side we had, we were capable of winning.

"Unfortunately you need a bit of luck and we met Adelaide City.

"I remember Tony Vidmar curled one in."

Although South's famous coach Ferenc Puskas had departed the previous year, and Jason was not to experience the Puskas influence directly, it still pervaded the team.

"The style they played, the way we trained.

"Ferenc had an influence while he was there and probably for a couple of years after.

"I know all the players enjoyed their experience under him."

South Melbourne's next year was less successful although they still made the Finals, losing 2-3 to Melbourne Knights, again in the Preliminary Final.

Mark Viduka scored all three Knights' goals in a game played in a downpour.

"Mark Viduka was the difference that day, with his hat-trick.

"I remember it was a muddy pitch.

"Danny Tiatto (the Knights' midfielder) got sent off and I think that was probably the worst thing that happened to us because Melbourne Knights actually started to play better with ten men.

"But if you look at the quality of the players in the Melbourne Knights

side: De Amicis, Marth, Marusic, Cervinski, Tiatto, and Viduka - they were a very strong side."

That was Frank Arok's first season in charge at South Melbourne. When I started to ask about Jason's view of Arok he was guarded in his responses.

Polite as throughout the discussion, he was not willing to go into much detail, although it was apparent he could say a lot if of a mind to.

"Every coach is different.

"It was an experience.

"It's hard to explain.

"He actually got rid of me after that year, he didn't want to sign me for the next year.

"I didn't figure in Frank's plans.

"(Arok's) been around for a long time so he certainly has more experience, and he had a different way of doing things to anything I'd experienced.

"I don't know what it was exactly.

"Frank never told me what he did like about me or what he didn't like about me."

TO BE CONTINUED
Brisbane,
South Melbourne
again and more

CONTINUED
NEXT
WEEK

A Profile of Australian Soccer Clubs: South Cardiff

Gunners now 50 plus

SOUTH Cardiff first kicked off as a soccer club over fifty years ago: the club starting in 1947-48.

The ground was acquired through a BHP lease.

But beyond these scant facts, little is known of the club's early years.

No official records were kept of those formative years.

The club played in the

cess.

They won the competition in 1954, and played a lead up game before the Australian team took the field.

Unfortunately the club then folded, and it wasn't until the 1960s that South Cardiff re-emerged as a formidable force in Newcastle soccer.

In 1978 the club was accepted into the Northern New South Wales

beaten by Rutherford.

In 1987, a South Cardiff team, coached by Steven Cox, was beaten by Croatia, and again in 1991, when John Hancock coached both grades to the finals.

However, once again, South Cardiff were beaten at the final hurdle.

In 1993 things began to look up for the club.

Their coach, Chris Miner took the first grade

reached the semi finals.

It's not surprising then that Chris Miner remains the senior coach at the club as the South Cardiff Weathertex Gunners prepare to take the field for the 1999 competition.

South Cardiff have a reputation amongst officials and football experts as being one of the most progressive, active clubs in the Hunter.

It seems highly likely,



THE SOUTH Cardiff Weathertex Gunners are fortunate to have the support of a strong Junior Club. Hard working committees over the years have seen the South Cardiff Junior Club continue to grow.

According to Robert Thompson, Secretary of the Juniors, this season the club will field a total of nineteen teams.

Sixteen of those teams are in the 6-17 age groups. The club also boasts two all-age teams

and one women's team.

"The all-age teams give our loyal youngsters an avenue for football after they break out of the junior ranks," Mr Thompson explained.

"The club has always felt that, after a player has supported the club for, maybe nine or ten years of junior soccer, we have an obligation to them."

Mr Thompson said the all-age teams provided kids with the

chance to still play soccer even if they didn't want to progress to the senior soccer ranks.

The relationship between Senior and Junior clubs at South Cardiff is a strong one. The clubs share the facilities at Jack Neave Oval.

"The juniors play on Saturdays, and the seniors on Sunday," Mr Thompson said.

"That means we have a full weekend of soccer at the oval, every weekend."

Tony Moffitt



all-age competition with home games at Holmesville and Killingworth.

It didn't take South Cardiff long to find suc-

Soccer Federation.

Once again, success was quick for the club.

They reached the finals in 1982, only to be

to the minor premiership.

In the same year he led the reserve grade to a Grand Final win, and the club's third grade

given the club's tradition of excellence and innovation, that 1999 could well provide yet another milestone in the club's proud history.

Having what is required

BY TONY MOFFITT

HOW many clubs do you know of have had the same soccer coach for seven years?

South Cardiff do.

Chris Miner stared coaching the club way back in 1992.

He's still there today as the club prepares for yet another season.

And he's still going strong - and he's still getting results.

And he still has the support of the club and the fans because he continues to get those results.

In an era where coaches come and go faster than seasonal fashions, Chris Miner's stay at South Cardiff has been one spectacular success after another.

He has led the club through all the grades; from a lower 3rd division team to a State 1st Division outfit that has a reputation for making things happen on the park.

"We've continued to have success, and as a result, I've continued to be challenged by the increased quality of the competition we come up against," Chris told In-

side Soccer.

For Chris, and the Gunners, the leap into 1st Division last year was a learning experience.

They'll go into the '99 season in good shape, and brimming with enthusiasm.

"Teams like Broadmeadow, Edgeworth and Olympic are the obvious ones to watch out for," Chris said.

"Actually, we're lucky.

"We've drawn all three of those clubs in our first three games of the season - it will be the perfect way to get an immediate gauge on how we will go this year.

"Those clubs will provide us with an early-season benchmark."

Miner said the club was thriving on the challenge of 1st Division - in particular, the different attitudes of the clubs.

"It's certainly great to be in the top level of competition.

"The clubs around us are very professional in their approach, and that lifts us as well."

Miner says 1998 was all about earning respect. 1999 will be about getting results.

"We have our sights set

on two targets; reaching the top five, and beating the 28 points we earned last year.

"Anything less will be a disappointment, no doubt about it."

Whilst diplomatic enough not to make a bold prediction for the season's outcome, he did say he believed South Cardiff had what was

required to make it into the final rounds of the competition.

"Like all play-off situations, you have to be there at the end to have a chance.

"Once we make that last step, the semi-finals can become a lottery.

"But you've got to be there to take the chance.

"That's what we're aiming for."

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From Real Madrid to Sydney: it's all experience says John

By Derek Royal

FEW people in Australian soccer have experienced the thrill of playing at Real Madrid's magnificent Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

But Canterbury-Marrickville coach John Xipolitas has.

Back in 1969 his Cypriot club side Olympiakos Nicosia met the Spanish giants in the first round of the European Cup.

In fact the 54 year-old Berries mentor takes great pleasure in mentioning the fact that the Real side contained a man he describes as the finest left-winger in the world - Spaniard Francisco Gento.

Xipolitas remembers he had to pinch himself when he walked into the Bernabeu cauldron before 70,000 fans.

"I said to myself, am I alive?" he told *Inside Soccer*.

"Then I pinched myself and yes, we were playing against Real Madrid."

While Real Madrid was too strong for Olympiakos, the Cypriot side put up a dogged fight against Yugoslav champions FK

Sarajevo in 1967, drawing 2-all at home, before succumbing to a 3-1 defeat in Yugoslavia.

Xipolitas also had the good fortune to share a special place in Cyprus football history in February 1968.

"I played for the Cyprus national team and was a member of the team that had its first win against a European nation, Switzerland, whom we beat 2-1," he remembers.

"It was a big achievement for a small country of 600,000 population."

Xipolitas played as a defensive midfielder for



and possessed an uncanny anticipation that he believes made him look faster than he actually was.

"I wasn't too fast in the

"I was reading the game and I was always there before the ball arrived."

In 1969 Xipolitas journeyed to Sydney, where he linked up with his current club Canterbury-Marrickville.

"I played one season, went back to Cyprus and returned with my family on 1st May 1970," he says.

"I played for the club until 1974, then in '75 I started my coaching career."

Xipolitas had coaching stints at Belmore Hercules, Marrickville Olympic, Sydney Olympic and Cyprus United and he's now into his sixth season with the Berries.

His current squad looks strong and Xipolitas is convinced that his team has the potential to improve on last year's fourth place showing.

"We are one year more experienced and one more year together," he says.

"If we go by the logic of learning by mistakes, then we have to do better than last year."

If not, then Xipolitas and the club will look upon the campaign as a failure.

Xipolitas concedes that he's fortunate to have a team possessing plenty of skill, but he would like to see them get tougher.

"We need to become more competitive because without competitive spirit you don't get anything," he says.

Too right.

But in a team boasting the likes of Nikas, Bosevski, Mendes, Fedele, Palapanis, Talceski and Christofiordis, Xipolitas has the foundations of a first class side.

And fortunately for those players, they have an experienced coach with an impressive track record to guide them.

Agno brings new talent to Wollongong Olympic

ONCE again Wollongong Olympic will play its Illawarra Premier League matches at its South Brandon home ground.

Chris Agno has been appointed head coach after the departure last season of former Wolves boss John Fleming.

Peter Kotamindis took over the reigns in a caretaker capacity last season for a while and has now stepped back into an assistant's role along with Eric Thompson, the former Dapto coach, who will coach the club's youth grade side.

Agno has signed several new players including Steve Krishna (Lysaghts) and Anthony

Guido (White Eagles).

Guido was last season's Premier League top scorer and may yet prove to be the club's best acquisition although the busy Krishna is very under-rated in Illawarra football.

Other signings include Bobby Brodie, Tony Donovan, goalkeeper Christian Preto (Fernhill) and Mark Borg while Kotaminidis, George Antonio, Adam Grey, Norm Wicker and Julio Miranda are all retained from last season.

Olympic will hold a pre-season launch at the Lagoon Restaurant on March 28.

Stuart Bell

AUSTRAL BRICK CUP

NOW in it's 10th year the Austral Brick Cup kicks off tomorrow night (Wednesday 24 February) at Ian McLennan Park, Kembla Grange.

Six teams will contest the \$2,000 prize money trophy over three successive weeks. First round ties are Fernhill v Dapto, South Coast United v Cringila Lions and Bulli v Port Kembla.

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Vanis blasts referee after Preston loss

VPL BIG MATCH REPORT with Bert van Bedaf

IT WAS a home coming of sorts for Preston coach Vlado Vanis, but obviously not the 2-1 loss to St Albans, but the referee's actions spoiled the fun for him in last Friday night's match against St Albans in round 4 of VPL action.

Vanis caned referee Dominic Barba afterwards for what he claimed was a poor performance.

Vanis, a former Melbourne Knights player in the national league, would have known every hole or bump on the Sunshine Stadium pitch but not quite what was in store for him against the Saints, the team he coached last season to a league premiership and a losing Grand Final to Bulleen, which earned him Victorian coach of the year.

Both teams had a player sent off.

Preston's Sasko Slaveski went in the 58th minute for his second bookable offence (his first came in the 38th) and Saints captain Mick Colina trudged off in the 88th, after copping his first yellow card early into the second half.

The match was scoreless at half time, but Harry Karl, the striker

who spurned the Knights to return to the Saints, found the net three minutes into the second half at the second bite on the turn from a Branko Bakac pass.

Preston was already with ten men when Tony Ujgunovski, on for Kamersimsek at half-time, levelled for the Lions in the 63rd minute, also with a shot on the turn from a free kick by Chris Emsovski.

But it proved hard to keep Karl down, as Preston stopper Sasa Ognovski discovered at cost after the Saints cleverly exploited the extra player by pushing youngster Ivan Razov up on the left flank.

A former Knights youth player, Razov's forays proved lethal and his cross from an interception in the 79th minute

enabled Karl to score the eventual winner with 11 minutes left.

Karl hit the far post in the 13th minute, but it was not as if Preston was without opportunities.

Strikers Kosta Smirnis stranded on Saints keeper Marjan Vunderl after 21 minutes and Warren Spink with only Vunderl to beat shot wide in the 36th minute.

Simsek found Vunderl

in his path with a minute left before the break.

Released by Slaveski and in a one-on-one with Vunderl, Spink hit the post in the 51st minute, only seven minutes before Slaveski departed, while Kon Sianidis hit the crossbar for St Albans with a long-range lob that could have been a speculative cross in the 66th minute during a chance-packed match.

Whether it was frustration over lost opportunities or expert observation, Preston coach Vlado Vanis hit out at referee Dominic Barba after the match.

"We had our chances," said Vanis.

"Warren Spink hit the post once and had a one-on-one with the goal keeper and I was thinking when is he going to score.

"At half-time I said to the boys: 'Let's put in another 100 per cent because I believe we are better team', and I think we played the game better anyway.

"In my eyes there were two penalties, when it was 2-1 for them (St Albans), but they weren't given to us.

"I've never ever said something against referees, but I don't think

tonight's referee was good enough for this league.

"This is not a whinge by me.

"I am proud of my boys.

"They lost the game, but they put in 100 per cent.

"The St Albans boys worked hard and they beat us 2-1 and good luck to them for the rest of the season.

"But, I'm telling you now, this referee was at his worst today."

St Albans coach Steven Rastocic, who stepped into Vanis's considerable shoes this season from being assistant and youth coach at the Knights, did not mention Barba once, but praised his players, especially teenager Razov.

"At first they (Preston) had the better of us," said

Rastocic, "but especially in the second half we proved we were the better team on the night.

"Harry Karl doesn't have to prove anything to me, but young Ivan Razov was an absolute superstar to me.

"He's 19-years-old, but he was all class.

"He proved the difference between the two teams.

"I had him last year in

the youth team at the Melbourne Knights and he went to the St Albans reserves, but I've had him playing for me this year and I couldn't ask for more from him.

"The biggest problem I had taking over from Vlado was changing systems.

"Obviously Vlado's were good systems, but I am a different person and pre-season was a shambles trying to convince the players to turn over to me.

"But finally they're starting to play more out wide, the way I want them to play, and we're starting to get results.

"Our central midfield is not the fastest in the league, so I ask them to stay central and distribute the ball to our wide flanks.

"We had both goals tonight coming through our flanks from quick balls though the middle,

so that's what we want to do week in week out."

The Saints coach disagreed with abandoning the finals this season in favour of the team finishing first at the end of the home and away rounds winning the championship.

"I can't understand that," he said.

"It's an absolutely crazy decision.

"The season could be over with six or seven weeks to go.

"But we've got a job to do and there's no doubt we'll be finishing somewhere in the top half."

Rastocic's assurance at least will put St Albans fans' anxieties at rest that the Saints won't be avoiding being one of the four clubs relegating this season.

EARLIER in the week, completing round three, Bulleen edged out Springvale White Eagles 2-1, losing sweeper John

Waddell for handling the ball in the 67th minute.

It was Bulleen's third sending off this season.

Agim Sherifovski and Paul Della Rocca were red-carded in earlier matches.

Waddell's sending off came with the score already in Bulleen's favour after Damian Everetts struck the opening goal in the 25th minute.

Dejan Mlinar equalised for the Eagles in the 49th minute, but Bulleen's new striker Vlad Babic hit his first and the winning goal for his new club on the hour.

Because of Waddell's ball handling, the Eagles also earned a penalty, but Sean Keogh, Bulleen's and Victoria's 'keeper of the year, guessed right and blocked Zlatko Mihalovic's shot.

On the same Monday night, South Dandenong beat Westvale 2-0 at Green Gully.



Warren Spink: back at VPL side Preston

Oceania open new Academy for youth in Auckland

By Bruce Campbell & Agency Sources

FIFA president Sepp Blatter and former French soccer captain Michel Platini will open the Oceania Football Academy in Auckland on next Saturday.

Blatter, who has captured headlines recently with his advocacy of playing the World Cup every two years, will open the youth academy to be based at the Mt Smart complex in Penrose.

The \$NZ1.2 million academy is entirely FIFA-funded in a deal secured in 1997 by Oceania Football Confederation President Charlie Dempsey.

FIFA has stated a desire to see soccer develop in the Oceania region.

The best youth players from the Oceania area - New Zealand, Australia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa and Tahiti - will be selected to live and train at the facility. The academy will also be used for seminars and courses for coaches, referees, administrators and sports medicine.

Blatter and New Zealand's Bill McGowan will unveil the logo and mascot for the under-17 tournament to be played in New Zealand in November.

McGowan was recently named chief executive

of the tournament's organising group.

However, it is difficult to see Australian players making over-use of the new facility given the amount of money spent on development at senior youth level in this country.

With the Australian Institute of Sport programme now backed up by State Institutes throughout the country, as well as many club programmes, Australia is well served at youth level.

Dempsey has come under fire from Australian quarters over the last few years. Many in the game will question the appointment of Auckland as the host venue for the

Academy. It might be argued that it is no more than a NZ Academy.

However, the facility will undoubtedly be a boost to the game and is one of only two significant achievements made by OFC in recent years, the other being Oceania's entry into the Confederations Cup.

More discussion is also expected on the question of Oceania entry into the World Cup and the qualification path.

FIFA will discuss the situation at its meeting in March with options being presented for Oceania's inclusion in South America as well as Asia.

Both proposals have the backing of the respective confederations.

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Carlton set to blood young talent

By David Arnold

CARLTON'S form fade-out this season has led coach Eddie Krncevic to question the ability of several senior players.

Whilst coaches under pressure after a series of poor results are liable to say anything, it's the second time this season Krncevic has made the same comment and several youngsters will be given time to impress before the season is out.

It would be a vindication of the long-term policies set in motion by Carlton officials, where emphasis is given to youth policies.

Marco Bresciano, Simon Colosimo and Vince Grella will attest to the success of Carlton in promoting and grooming younger players for the big time.

Carlton released several youngsters a couple of months ago, but kept their promising defenders, Ivica Klarica expected, leading to speculation that several senior defenders will be shown the door at the end of the season when their initial two-year contracts expire.

Those youngsters likely to be given their chances are:

David Grbac, 17-years-old, 5 NSL appearances.

A right midfielder/defender of unlimited talent, highly rated by club officials, moving one to say: "if he doesn't make it then something is wrong".

Grbac, despite a slight frame and young age, is not especially fast, instead relying on uncanny positioning and a svelte touch.

Throw in good dribbling skills and a firm shot and we have a player seemingly destined for international recognition.

The 2001 World Youth Cup should see him come into his own.

David Della Rocca.

21, 19 NSL appearances. Della Rocca, with the build of a boxer and nicknamed after one (De La Hoya) remains the defensive bulwark of the youth team, patiently waiting for his chance.

Strong in the tackle and with good positional sense in the air, he remains behind the pecking order of Carlton's numerous defensive players.

Serdar Pir.

19, 2 NSL appearances. A marker with speed to burn and of Colosimo-



quality on the ball, his only obstacle to first team progress is Colosimo himself.

Pir is not especially tall nor strong, relying on his speed to make up for any mistake and he prefers jockeying opponents into corners.

Although groomed as a central defender/marker, I feel his best position will

be sweeper, where he reminds one of Simon Colosimo bringing the ball out of defence.

Put bluntly, he is too good to waste at marker.

Tony Ouliaris.

17, 1 NSL appearance. Tony is a technical striker who has improved his goal scoring for the Carlton Academy side

this year, resulting in a call-up to the seniors a few weeks ago.

He is extremely versatile, having appeared in defence and on the flanks for the Academy over the last two years.

With Carlton's shortage of strikers, he should make further appearances from the sub's bench this season.

Second division no pipe dream

By Bert van Bedaf

PRESTON board member George Nestorovski had called for an urgent push to establish a Super League next season as a forerunner to a future second division national league.

"We have to push for a Super League for the year 2000 and for a second division national league," said Nestorovski.

"We're in a stalemate position with soccer in Victoria.

"We need a growth path by re-introducing promotion and relegation to give clubs and soccer a future," Nestorovski said.

A Super League has been talked about for some time.

Victorian Soccer Federation chairman Joe Brondolino has been pushing for a joint league between elite clubs of the Victorian and New South Wales Premier Leagues for some time, to be expanded with other interstate clubs to form a second national league enabling promotion and relegation between state leagues and national divisions, including the Ericsson Cup.

Soccer Australia chairman Basil Scarcella said, in principle, he was in favour of a second division national league and

a promotion and relegation system.

"My view is the sport thrives on competition at both ends, the top and the bottom end," he said.

"Top leagues around the world always have promotion and relegation.

"We should have the same."

With the impending four-year elevation of Brondolino to the Soccer Australia board at the February 28 annual general meeting, the push for a second division national league may become less of a pipedream and more of a reality in the near future.

THE Victorian Soccer Federation has appointed Debbie Ward as marketing and events manager.

Ms Ward previously worked as sponsorship co-ordinator for the state government's anti-smoking Quit campaign.

VSF chief executive Geoff Miles said he welcomed Ms Ward to her new role.

SOCCER Referees Victoria is looking for new whistleblowers.

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Demons Cruise Home

By Derek Royal

Football's a strange game.

A team can play well for little or no reward, yet even on a bad day, any team can sample the sweet taste of victory.

Blacktown played some brilliant football in last week's loss to Macarthur.

The Brian Brown coached side played with such panache and exuberance that they not only entertained the crowd but left a positive impression on themselves as title contenders.

Despite the loss, the general consensus seemed to be: 'if we can play like that all season, then we're certainly in for a promising season'.

But against the Sutherland Sharks a week later, the Demons lacked the same intensity - yet somehow, they still managed to steal a 2-0 victory.

"It's easy to make the mistake of thinking we should win particular games, but Sutherland will cause a few problems for teams this year," said Brown.

"They worked very hard, have some very good players and made it very hard for us."

Indeed. The superb play of the Sharks' Levi Stephen troubled the Demons, while Malcolm Bideau, Jimmy Corbo and keeper Dennis Olla were all impressive in a beaten side.

Brown was forced to reshuffle his lineup due to the unavailability of defender Steve Riches and goal-poacher Jason Bennett.

Instead of the usual three-pronged attack, the Demons used Jon Angelucci and Stuart Cleary up front and the move paid off when Cleary opened the scoring with a header after 28 minutes.



Richard Lloyd

Cleary then extended the lead in the 59th minute, toe poking the ball home through a school of Sharks defenders.

Sutherland must dread facing Cleary for in two matches between the sides, the Demons' number nine has scored an incredible six goals.

Coach Brown injected Josh Jackett into the game in the 65th minute and the youngster showed some class and was unlucky not to add to his team's score.

When asked what pleased him the most about the victory, Brown replied: "The three points."

"I think I was probably happier last week when we lost - because of our performance."

"But when you realise everybody judges you on whether you got the points or you didn't, then I've got to be happy."

Meanwhile, Bonnyrigg White Eagles scored a convincing 4-1 victory

against Parramatta Eagles at the Serbian Centre - the side's first win of the season.

Coach John Turner was happy with the performance of 18 year-old goalkeeper Sasha Bozic, who was making his first team debut, and said he was certain his team had turned the corner after struggling in the first two rounds.

The White Eagles led 3-0 at the break following goals to Colin Luff and two to Javier Mancino, while Parramatta's Grant Bard pulled one back early in the second half.

Captain Paul Richardson scored the fourth.

Coach Turner said he was pleased with his side's mobility and newfound sense of urgency.

Central Coast sprang a minor upset in holding Canterbury-Marrickville to a 2-all draw at Henson Park.

Berries striker Jimmy Nikas opened the scor-

ing, but Coasties' skipper Peter Preston equalised for a one-all halftime scoreline.

Further goals to Nikas and Central Coast's Nathan Byrn completed the scoring. Berries coach John Xipolitis was pleased with his side's performance but was disappointed that two on-field incidents didn't lead to penalties.

Xipolitis praised Terry Palapanis, Matthew Percy and Angelo Markopoulos and also acknowledged that the Coasties' dynamic style was always a danger to his side.

Macarthur Rams continued their unbeaten run with a 3-2 victory against the Leichhardt Tigers at Lambert Park.

Rams Coach Casey De Bruin said the score flattered the Tigers, who scored their second goal on the stroke of full-time.

Richard Lloyd, Trevor Whidett and Adrian Macerola scored for the Rams, while Chris Lansdowne and Mite Talceviski struck for the Tigers.

Tigers' coach Arno Bertogna conceded that his side's failure to capitalise on opportunities probably cost them the game. Martin Bourke, David Reid and keeper John Crawley shone for the Rams, while Bertogna praised Lansdowne, Jeremy Pettenon and Anthony Tesoro.

Bankstown City Lions exorcised the demons of last week's humiliating defeat to Canterbury-Marrickville by beating Fairfield Bulls 3-1 at Jensen Park.

In a game of two halves, the Bulls led 1-0 at the break following a strike by fullback Martin Driene. But Bankstown equalised through Michael Hawrysiuk, before Robert Issa and Zoki Adioski sealed the game for the home side.

Lions' coach Sakib Lovic praised his side, especially young Kiro Grozdanovski, who kept Bulls' sharpshooter Mathew Borg quiet, Hawrysiuk and Mendo Lozeviski.

In a dull affair at Wentworth Park, Ryde City and Eastern Suburbs fought a 2-all draw.

Easts dominated the first three quarters of the match, with defender Peter Pulicino grabbing two goals for a 2-nil lead.

But former Soccerro Scott Ollerenshaw destroyed Easts' hopes with two late goals from close range.

Ryde coach Les Decelis said his side was dreadful but he's confident that once he gets some respite with injuries, his side will show some improvement.

SIR JOHN'S EAGLES SET TO SOAR AGAIN

By Derek Royal

OUT at the Serbian Centre in Sydney's south western suburbs, the locals consider Bonnyrigg White Eagles coach John Turner an honorary Serb.

"They call me Sir John because I've been around the place for so long that they think I deserve a knighthood," quipped the affable coach.

"As a matter of fact, they call me Turnervic."

The story goes that in the past 18 years, the club has had no less than 22 coaches.

And after Turner's premiership favourites crashed to a humbling 5-2 defeat to crosstown rivals Bankstown City Lions in the opening round of this year's Super League, the sound of

sharpening knives could be heard from Bonnyrigg to Bankstown.

"Who knows - I might be the next to go," said Turner.

"But it's not a matter of push the panic button for Bonnyrigg."

"If I did that I wouldn't have survived for so long."

"It's a matter of getting back to basics."

Indeed.

It's rare for Bonnyrigg to lose two straight games and Turner's confidence proved well-founded as his side has

followed opening round defeat with a draw at newly-promoted Fairfield Bulls and a superb victory against Parramatta Eagles.

"Look, everyone wanted us and I'm of the understanding that Bankstown was thrilled to be playing us first up," he said.

"Because of the ethnic thing between the Serbs (White Eagles) and the Macedonians (Bankstown) and the fact that we won the championship last year, they were pumped up big time."

"Our guys were not. They read the press reports and they believed what everyone was saying about them."

Turner added that against Fairfield, his side had close to fifteen corners in the last quarter of an hour, such was their territorial dominance in a goal-less second half.

But Turner did agree that his side's attitude has proved costly in the past.

For instance, last year the White Eagles' thirteen game winning streak was ended by Ryde City - a team that hadn't won a game all season.

Then by the end of the year, they'd been held to draws by the struggling Central Coast and Sutherland Sharks.

But the biggest hu-

miliation came at the hands of the relegated St George.

"They didn't just beat us, they beat us 5-1," says Turner.

"Yet no-one in the top five could roll with us."

Except of course, Blacktown City Demons in the most important match of the season - the Grand Final.

"Complacency is a problem."

"Before the game against Bankstown some of our guys were reading the Super Soccer magazine and some of them said they didn't know who the Bankstown guys were."

"Now they do."

However, if there's one consolation to Bonnyrigg, it's the fact that losing so early in the season has served as wake-up call, offering the side plenty of time to rectify a state of mind that could prove more dangerous as the season progresses.

As Bankstown has since discovered, one victory doesn't make a season, nor does one defeat extinguish the flame of hope.

But for Sir John Turnervic, he'd like to think his gifted team has learnt a valuable lesson in humility, and he expects his White Eagles to once again soar to the lofty heights they experi-

NSW SOCCER FEDERATION SUPER LEAGUE

ROUND 4

Saturday 27th February

Blacktown City Demons v Central Coast

Gabbie Stadium, 6:00pm

Macarthur Rams v Ryde City

Lynwood Park, 7:00pm

Sutherland Sharks v Leichhardt Tigers

Seymour Shaw Park, 7:00pm

Sunday 28th February

Fairfield Bulls v Canterbury Marrickville

Ninevah Field, 6:00pm

Eastern Suburbs vs Bonnyrigg White Eagles

Wentworth Park, 5:00pm

Parramatta Eagles vs Bankstown City Lions

Melita Stadium, 5:00pm

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NSW SUPER LEAGUE
ROUND 4
Sunday 28 February

Seymour Shaw Park
KICK OFF 7pm

Women's World Cup

THE host United States will kick off the third Women's World Cup soccer tournament against Denmark at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, on June 19.

The Americans, who captured the first Olympic women's gold medal in soccer three years ago, will also play Nigeria and North Korea in their other Group A opening-round games of the 16-team championship.

The United States will meet Nigeria in Chicago on June 24 and then North Korea in Foxboro, Mass. on June 27, which will be first-time encounters for the Americans.

"You could call this the unknown group, because we really don't know Korea or Nigeria very well," U.S. coach Tony DiCicco said.

"Denmark has been a strong physical opponent for us in the past and will be a good test for us in the opener."

Defending champion Norway, one of four seeded countries, heads Group C, which includes Japan, Canada and Russia.

"It could have been

Group D: China, Ghana, Australia, Sweden.

worse," Norway coach Per Høegme said.

"The big question was not to draw Brazil, which we are happy to have avoided.

"The group with Brazil looks very difficult."

"I'm very happy," Norway captain and defender Linda Medalen said.

"These are teams we think we can beat.

"We're thinking of Sydney next year."

The top eight teams from the World Cup will qualify for the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

A fierce battle looms in Group B comprised of seeded Germany, Brazil, Italy and Mexico.

"Very ouch," Mexican midfielder Laurie Hill said.

"It is going to be a very tough group.

"They are challenging us with this draw, but we are up to the challenge."

Group D includes top-seeded China, the Olympic silver medalists, Australia, Ghana and Sweden.

The Women's World

Cup will be played at seven venues this summer: Foxboro, Mass., Chicago, Pasadena, Calif., Portland, Ore., San Jose, Calif., Washington, D.C. and East Rutherford.

All first-round and quarter-final matches are double-headers, with the championship game scheduled for the Rose Bowl in Pasadena on July 10, which was the site of the 1994 World Cup final.

The draw was held at halftime of the first women's world all-star game as the all-stars overcame a 1-0 halftime deficit to record a 2-1 win.

Canadian forward Charmaine Hooper scored twice within a six-minute span, in the 55th and 61st minutes.

U.S. international midfielder Michelle Akers fractured a bone below her left eye during a collision with Medalen while going for a high corner kick in the first half.

Women's World Cup schedule

Group A: United States, North Korea, Nigeria, Denmark

Group B: Germany, Brazil, Mexico, Italy

Group C: Canada, Japan, Russia, Norway

Group D: China, Australia, Ghana, Sweden.

First Round

Saturday, June 19

United States vs. Denmark, East Rutherford

Brazil vs. Mexico, East Rutherford

China vs. Sweden, San Jose

Japan vs. Canada, San Jose

Sunday, June 20

Australia vs. Ghana, Foxboro

Norway vs. Russia, Foxboro

Germany vs. Italy, Pasadena

North Korea vs. Nigeria, Pasadena

Wednesday, June 23

Norway vs. Canada, Washington, D.C.

Australia vs. Sweden, Washington, D.C.

Japan vs. Russia, Portland

China vs. Ghana, Portland

Thursday, June 24

Brazil vs. Italy, Chicago

United States vs. Nigeria, Chicago

North Korea vs. Denmark, Portland

Germany vs. Mexico, Portland

Saturday, June 26

Canada vs. Russia, East Rutherford

China vs. Australia, East Rutherford

Ghana vs. Sweden, Chicago

Norway vs. Japan, Chicago

Sunday, June 27

Germany vs. Brazil, Washington, D.C.

Nigeria vs. Denmark, Washington, D.C.

Mexico vs. Italy, Foxboro

United States vs. North Korea, Foxboro

Quarter-finals

Wednesday, June 30

Group D 1st vs. Group C 2nd, San Jose

Group C 1st vs. Group D 2nd, San Jose

Thursday, July 1

Group A 1st vs. Group B 2nd, Washington, D.C.

Group B 1st vs. Group A 2nd, Washington, D.C.

Semifinals

Sunday, July 4

Washington, D.C. quarter-final winners, San Jose,

San Jose quarter-final winners, Foxboro

Third-place

Saturday, July 10, Pasadena

Championship game

Saturday, July 10 Pasadena



Belconnen stand-out Jason Dunn

Bells kick off away

ACTSF Champion Belconnen United kicks off its 1999 campaign on April 11 with a match against Capital City Suns at O'Connor Oval, while Juventus and Monaro meet at Jamison.

The other opening-day matches are: Queanbeyan City v University of Canberra, Burns Club v Olympic, Weston Creek v Deakin.

Inside Soccer's TRIVIA MOMENTS Sponsored by SOCCERLINE

WHO won the first ever National Soccer League title in 1977?

ANSWER: see Ram Scoreboard, p30.

QUEENSLAND PREMIER LEAGUE BIG MATCH UPDATE: ROUND 1

Chinese New Year forebodes Lions opening season win

By Howard Warren

THERE were ominous sign before the commencement of the Rochedale v Lions game when a small troupe celebrated the Chinese New Year with a lion dance.

Did this mean the prelude to a Lions win or simple pre-match entertainment?

The crowd were left in no doubt at the conclusion of the game which witnessed Rovers falling short of the standard required to win the premiership.

Rovers fielded largely the same side as last years runners up with the addition of Nick Alidenes signed from the NSW State League.

There was continuing evidence that Rovers are short of at least two/three quality players and it should be of concern that Kieran Cooper, who missed last season due to retirement, still looked very capable of holding a

place in the Rovers side.

Lions looked creative and will certainly be one of the teams to beat.

The biggest problem on Saturday night's showing was lack of punch up front where Wade Cannon and Greg Di Losa both finished the game on the bench.

Neither player looked particularly effective with Lions main goal scoring threat coming from their mid-field.

Rovers first attempt on goal came in the tenth minute from their stalwart Kieran Cooper whose turn caught the Lion's defence wrong footed only to see the ball go wide of the near post.

Until this incident Lions had gained a distinct edge looking more threatening in their build up.

However, the nearest they came to scoring came a couple of minutes after Cooper's miss when Rochedale defender Michael Lane came close to scoring an own goal by

slicing a clearance across the face of the goal for a corner.

The game moved into a predictable pattern with the Lions looking more constructive in the build-up but promising little through Cannon and Di Losa.

Rovers in contrast too often lacked the sophistication of a measured build up preferring to circumnavigate the floodlights with some hasty clearances.

In this respect Ross Davidson had not lost his 'touch'.

In the twentieth minute a dangerous cross from Evans fell invitingly for Rovers new signing Nick Alidenes who headed weakly wide of the target.

This was quickly followed by a dangerous cross from Lion's Steve Jackson, which was met by the head of Frank Mengotti who sent the ball looping goal wards for Graham Ross to save relatively easily.

Moments later witness the first of five yellow cards to Lions players when Cannon was involved in an innocuous tussle with Evans only to receiving a booking from a very inconsistent Mr Eldridge.

The first half concluded with Darren Hillier having a good opportunity to score but shot high over the cross bar.

The Lions bore the brunt of Mr Eldridge's inconsistency which led to the booking of Darren Hillier for kicking the ball away after conceding a free kick.

Peter Bannon, the Rovers coach, made a change at half time by leaving Evans in the dressing room, dropping Clayton Koch back to mid-field and brought on Matt Olley, their goal scoring sensation of the latter half of last season.

This move worked like a charm when for the second time in the match Rob Farrow, the Lions

goalkeeper, dropped the ball on the edge of the penalty area for Olley to sweep the ball into the net.

One substitute and a goal in the second minute of the second half.

Rover's goal proved to be their downfall.

The impact was more effective on Lions than any dressing-room talk at half time.

Within two minutes they had won a corner which was played short and the ball was eventually worked across to Greg Di Losa who took everyone by surprise as he proceeded to hammer the ball past Graham Ross in the Rovers goal.

Rovers in return immediately took the game to Lions and a headed knock-down by Cooper to Koch resulted in Koch hitting the turf but Rover's claim for a penalty was disallowed.

Ten minutes into the half Lions created well on the left only for

Mengotti to hit over the bar when well placed.

Four minutes later Di Losa shot wide instead of passing to the unmarked Hillier who was waiting for a simple side foot into goal.

In the sixty fifth minute Cooper showed that he had not lost any of his positional sense by heading against the bar from a free kick.

Two minutes later he again got involved in a fifty/fifty challenge for the ball which resulted in Jeff Lombardo finding himself the third Lions player in the referee's book.

The resulting free kick found Cooper on the far post who failed to make a clean contact with the ball and only managed to push it across the face of the goal.

In the twenty seventh minute Koch was in full flight toward the Lions goal when he was cynically tripped by Jackson, yellow card number four and the first

that was deserved.

This incident was followed by another booking for Lions when Steven Starr pushed David Pilic in the back.

With ten minutes remaining coach Miron Bleiberg decided to substitute Mengotti for Craig Rogers.

The following minute Hillier threatened the Rovers goal with a dangerous shot that was well saved by Ross.

Moment's later Cannon came close to scoring when he slipped his defender and shot narrowly wide.

Rovers then retaliated with Gary Brattan shooting straight at Farrow in the Lions goal.

Five minutes from the end Cannon made a powerful run into the Rovers box, half hit a shot which was parried by Ross only for the ball to roll to Rogers who gleefully side footed the ball home.

Cannon was then promptly substituted and replaced by Robert Laslo.

Laslo was quickly into the fray with a dangerous run into the penalty area, which resulted in him being brought down.

Lions final booking was Ben Alkins for dissent.

In the last minute Adam Leflay replaced Greg Di Losa.

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE ROUND-UP

With Roy Hay

National Youth League (Southern Division)

South v Albury

South Melbourne made and missed a barrowload of chances in its two-nil win over Albury Wodonga, yet despite being penned in its own half for most of the game, it was the country team which probably had the two most clear cut opportunities of the game.

Just to confuse matters the Blues strikers came out wearing each other's tops, but it was Andrew Mashoian who got the break through after 15 minutes.

John Tambouris took the Albury defence with him as Mashoian slid the ball under keeper Sam Chambers. Chambers had an exceptional game, making a series of point-blank stops and deflections.

Robert Tudor should have equalised in 42 minutes, when he slid the ball wide of Chris Jones' post from a through ball by Javier Martinez.

Four minutes after the break Jones had to touch over a blast from Robert Tudor again.

Just short of the hour

mark, Mustafa Mustafa whipped over a cross and Erhan Bayraktar finished it off to give Souths a two-nil cushion.

Late in the game two players were sent off but neither side could score thereafter.

Knights v VIS

Melbourne Knights and the VIS played out a classic at Grange Reserve which finished with the Knights on top by the odd goal in five.

Damon Collina opened for the Knights after three minutes, then Michael Bosevski made it two, only for Angelo Motsiopoulos to pull a goal back in 34.

Scott McDonald scored the equaliser for the VIS on the hour mark, but Hrvoje Matkovic restored the Knights' advantage four minutes later.

The VIS had its chance to draw level again but a missed penalty in 83 minutes condemned it to defeat, but the game left the fans happy.

This was a Round One, catch-up game.

Carlton v Falcons

Carlton recorded a two-one away win at Mobil

Stadium over the Gippsland Falcons.

Alex Josifovski gave the Blues a flying start in 9 minutes, but Tony Pardo equalised on the stroke of half-time.

Deniz Ekicic replied four minutes later for Carlton which had control from then on.

Bulleen v VIS

The match between Bulleen and the VIS from Round 20 will be rearranged.

(Northern Division)

AIS v Wolves

There were three catch-up games played this week.

On Tuesday the Australian Institute of Sport beat Wollongong Wolves three-one in the last match left over from Round One.

Elias Dimourtzidis continued his rich scoring form with two goals and Joshua Kennedy got the other.

Chad Bishop's penalty was the Wolves only reply.

Breakers v NSWIS

Also on Tuesday, the Newcastle Breakers beat New South Wales Institute of Sport three-nil.

Paul Wheeler got a double, and Saoud Umlil the third, in what was a Round 11 catch-up game.

Wolves v ACTAS

Then on Saturday it was the turn of Wollongong Wolves Colts and the ACT Academy of Sport to play an exciting three-all draw at Brandon Park in a match postponed from Round 16.

Tanayatis Tzolikidis, Saso Popovski and Nathan Broad were the scorers for the Colts, while Matthew Julienne, Goran Veljanovski, and Daniel Raad scored for ACTAS with the result in doubt to the very end.

AIS v QAS

In Round 20, the AIS had a four-nil win over the Queensland Academy.

Defenders scored the first two goals, in the shape of Ljubo Milicevic and Johnny Cvetanovski.

Then Kevo Gulesserian and Elias Dimourtzidis got in on the act.

Daniel Vasilevski and Wayne Shroj caught the eye for the AIS.

Breakers v Spirit

Newcastle Breakers beat Northern Spirit Colts by four goals to one.

Tony Bauer, Paul Wheeler, Josh Maguire and Peter Juchniewicz did the damage for the Breakers.

Sydney United v Colts

Sydney United Youth had a four-nil win over its Colts side.

Greg Collins got a double, and Daniel Kucka's goal was his fourteenth of the season. Josp Moric scored the fourth.

Marconi

On Sunday, Marconi Fairfield Colts drew three-all, but no details were available at time of

writing.

Marconi v Olympic

Marconi Fairfield beat Sydney Olympic Academy nine-nil at Wentworth Park, with hat-tricks for Luke Tomich and Joe Bruni being the highlights.

Michael Beauchamp, Mark Hagger and own goal made up the total.

NSWIS v Spirit

New South Wales Institute of Sport beat Northern Spirit by three goals to nil, starting with a Simon Catanzaro effort following a goalmouth

scramble in eight minutes.

It was not till 82 minutes that the NSWIS scored its second when Nauhel Arrarte converted.

The Institute had Mark Byrnes sent off, but substitute Anthony Doumanis made it three in 87 minutes.

In a tight game keeper Matthew Nash was outstanding once again for the Institute, while the Spirit's youth team pays the penalty for so many of its regulars being called up for senior duty.

Cassar is first Vic casualty

ALTONA's Chris Taylor was one of two VPL coaches to resign last week.

Sunshine's Anthony Cassar also called it quits.

Georgies spokesman Vic Brincat said the club and coach parted amicably.

They could not agree in the direction of the team this season.

Cassar wanted to use young talent and build for the future.

But results were poor and with four clubs relegating this season, panick set in early.

"This is a real cut throat season and

survival is our prime objective," Brincat said.

"Cassar's and the club's aims were different.

"He played a lot of young kids, but at the same time we need to survive.

"We also need experienced players to stay in the league."

Cassar was unsure whether he would continue playing.

Meanwhile, long-time injured stopper John Kanasoulis is taking over in a player-caretaker coach.

City take Charity Shield

QSF Charity Shield, Perry Park, Saturday, 13th February
Brisbane City 3 Brisbane Lions 1

By Tony Moran

Encounters between these two former NSL rivals are always contests of the best things about football. They're always special occasions, and with their respective pedigrees, the two clubs know that there is always more than pride at stake.

City, the 1998 League Premiers (by a clear ten points) and Lions (who came from third to win the Championship) couldn't have put on a better display if they had tried harder.

The game threw up a number of surprises - not least a number of rule changes on trial to give us something different.

Instead of a yellow card, there would be a "blue card" - a ten minute sin-bin stint for the offender. Should the game go to extra-time and still not yield a goal, there would be a 50-yard - 12 second shoot-out.

This was going to be an interesting evening.

Lions had lost a number of players after last season's triumph, most notably Steve Jackson, who had finally decided to hang up the boots.

Also gone were Mark Geritz, Paul Worroll and

David Lonsdale.

But the new crop of youngsters would be complemented by ex-Brisbane Striker Vedran Becirbegovic, who has returned to Queensland after a spell in Belgium, and Wade Cannon who has returned to the club after a loan spell with Wynnum.

For City 'keeper Daniel Duke is still on duty with the Strikers, Chris Slater and Warren Cooley were also not present, but the return of Royce Brownlie and new signing Nathan Carlross were enough to give the impression that City would not be weakened by those losses.

But Lions hadn't read the script, and a superb free-kick by captain Darren Hillier on the edge of the box after five minutes, brought the Lions faithful to their feet.

As the first half progressed Lions continued to harass their more composed opponents.

City's attempts to build from the back were constantly thwarted as the final ball went astray or was intercepted by a Lions defence well-organised by Frank Mengotti.

The game deteriorated

into a struggle for the midfield, and both teams were reduced to ten men during different stages of this intense struggle - Darren Sime for Lions, and Mark Battistin for City.

Although not a dirty match, it was very physical, and there was definitely no charity being given in some of the tackles.

Lions had a second goal disallowed when Mengotti's free-kick was disallowed after he'd taken it before the whistle, and both teams were glad to hear the half-time whistle.

The second half livened up. City were obviously out to erase the deficit, whilst Lions were looking for a second.

Wade Cannon received a "blue", and City began to apply the pressure.

Battistin controlled a flick-on at the front post, but his swivel turn and shot hit the advertising boards. Minutes later Shane Haddow's looping shot hit the bar with

City: Tarraborelli, Strange, Elliot, Voss, Tuck, Haddow, Waugh, Jenkins, Carlos, Battistin, Brownlie. (Subs: Geminelli, Cootes, Appledyne, Dessi - all used)
Lions: Farrow, Alcan, Sime, Starr, Mengotti, Hillier, Becirbegovic, Watson, Farinazzo(G), DiLosa, Cannon (Subs: Laslo, Lombardo, Rogers, Farinazzo (L) - all used)

Robbie Farrow beaten in the Lions goal.

On the hour a simple free-kick by Elliot was fumbled by Farrow, and Brownlie bundled the ball over the line as he followed up.

Lions' heads visibly dropped at that stage, but minutes later striker Greg DiLosa picked up the ball well inside his own half and beat three defenders on a weaving run towards the City goal.

Forced wide his cross was met by Robbie Laslo who would have thought that he had scored as he sent substitute goalkeeper Appledyne the wrong way.

However the 'keeper stuck out a leg, and the ball was deflected for a corner.

From then on it was all City, and after 85 minutes Haddow made it 2-1, and Lions knew that the game was up.

In injury time Damian Waugh scored from a flick-on corner, and the game was safe.

Jessica slams five: Pirates and Eclipse into Grand Final

By Ted Simmons and Janene Mar

SOUTH Australia Pirates bounced into their third consecutive WNL summer series Grand Final with a 2-1 overtime win against Northern NSW in Adelaide on Sunday.

The South Australians moved into the Grand Final against Canberra Eclipse after the match between Queensland and reigning premier New South Wales ended in a 1-1 draw.

Canberra had cemented first place last week and NSW needed maximum points on Sunday to reach the final.

South Australia had to survive enormous pressure to win after Alison Forman opened the score for Northern NSW in the 27th minute and Louisa Bisby tied the match 11 minutes later.

With six minutes remaining, South Australian Anna Ruotolo suffered a suspected neck injury and the referee wanted to end the game with the score 1-1 but decided to resume play after a 20 minutes break.

Sharon Black scored the winner for the South Australians with three minutes left of extra time and the team then had to wait another ten minutes before the final result from Brisbane won

them a place in the final.

In Sunday's other match, Alicia Ferguson gave Queensland a great start with a 7th minute goal and the team then defied NSW efforts to hold the lead going into the second half.

However, Joanne Peters converted a free kick in the 60th minute for the equaliser and striker Julie Murray almost snatched the winner for the premiers but her shot hit the upright and bounced away.

Earlier in the weekend round, South Australian striker Jessica Halfpenny created a league record when she scored all five goals in the team's 5-0 win over Northern NSW.

Halfpenny scored three of her goals in the first half and then added another brace in the second.

The first was a well-placed fifth minute strike after receiving a brilliant ball from midfield.

Halfpenny's second came after NNSW were caught pushing forward in search of the equaliser.

Canberra finished the season on 30 points, two ahead of South Australia with another point to third placed NSW.

The Grand Final will be played at Canberra's Ainslie Football (Australian Rules) Club on Sunday 28 February.

Fighting Knights go down

By Alan Clark

THE final score was closer than the difference between the sides, as Northern Spirit seemed always to be able to shift into another gear whenever threatened, at one point opening up a two goal lead before Ice Kutlesovski brought the game back to within Knights' grasp with a goal nine minutes from time.

Spirit had squandered a penalty on the way - Robbie Slater's 52nd minute effort was blocked by the hard-working Joe Didulica after Ivan Jolic had fouled Matthew

Langdon in the area.

Two encroaching Knights players were not noticed by referee Louis Prospero, and the ball was swept clear.

The game was balanced at that time - Daniel Watkins' 34th minute strike from close-in converted a driven cross from the impressive Langdon for the Spirit opener which was often earlier threatened.

But eight minutes later, Knights had battered back into the contest with a well-taken shot after a storming run through the middle by Ante Kovacevic.

Before the game had re-

started, Knights' sweeper, and principal marker of Slater, had found his name in Prospero's book presumably for exchanging an opinion thought unnecessary by the official.

The Saturday night crowd settled in at the break with optimism, perhaps recalling Knights' 3-1 win over Adelaide City here the previous Sunday.

The game had been switched to the time unfamiliar to the Knights Stadium faithful because of an anomaly in the fixtures which had all three Melbourne clubs playing home games that round.

Night football is more the preserve of Spirit, and that may have provided the second-half edge.

And it wasn't long in coming.

Within a minute of the re-start, Spirit regained the lead.

Jolic, later to give away the penalty, had managed to get his head to a free-kick taken by Slater wide on the left, only to find it skidding handily for Spirit player-coach Graham Arnold, who tucked his header into the now unguarded net.

What then seemed likely was that Spirit's unrelenting pressure and the presumed extra fitness their full-time footballers could bring to bear on the contest would overpower the home side. Slater had harassed the



Knights' back four into conceding possession while inter-passing and homed-in on Didulica.

Slater's thunderbolt was gathered at the second attempt by the Knights' tall Olyroo keeper.

Then came the penalty which Didulica again blocked, and shortly after Clayton Zane's introduction from the bench on the hour, Didulica was again in scrambling action.

What was surprising about the third goal was that it took so long.

But it inevitably did 78 minutes in when Slater coolly scored with his head after a perfectly flighted Luke Casserly cross from the right.

Zane had begun the move with a powerful run

splitting the Knights' defence, before playing a ball back enabling its progress to Casserly.

Nine minutes before time, Ice Kutlesovski gave the Knights' fans some slim hope of joy with a well struck shot from the edge of the area, but by then Knights had run themselves to a standstill.

Matthew Bingley made a serviceable debut for Spirit without setting the game alight.

Arnold said: "Bingley today just did a job."

"He'll benefit a lot from the run today."

"That was far from the best he can do."

"One thing we don't have in our team is a midfielder who can run box to box."

"I think Matthew can do that for us."

"I thought their two wide men - Pondeljak and Kiratzoglou - both had good games."

"I stressed to Casserly and Langdon that they were going to be in for a hard game and they were," said Arnold.

Knights' coach Josip Biskic was disappointed at the loss but happy with the fighting abilities of his struggling team.

"My boys kept going," said Biskic.

"For all ninety minutes it was exciting, and I'm pleased because of that."

"Both teams played (well). I'm disappointed only because we didn't take any points."

"But life goes on."

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 2 (Kovacevic, Kutlesovski)
NORTHERN SPIRIT 3 (Watkins, Arnold, Slater)
Venue: Knights Stadium
Man of the Match: Joe Didulica MELK

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Bootsie shocks United in rare home defeat

By Ted Simmons

CON Boutsianis struck twice with deadly effect to zoom Perth Glory back into title calculation and inflict Sydney United's first home loss in three seasons in the National Soccer League on Sunday.

Perth won 4-3 in a fluctuating match in which two players were sent off.

United led 2-0 in the first half and completely outplayed Perth, forcing the visiting team to concede eight corners to nil.

Boutsianis brought the Glory back with a tremendous scoring free

kick just before halftime and headed the winner in the final minute.

"We should have buried them in the first half and threw the game away at the end," said United coach David Mitchell.

United produced a brilliant display of one-touch passing football, dominated the midfield and crashed through the shaky Perth defence.

Midfielder Ante Moric was most effective in taking the repeated corner kicks and his 16th minute effort was nodded into the net by Joe Vrkic.

Seven minutes later, Mile Sterjovski robbed

the defence and his pass was whipped to the waiting Joel Griffiths who gave no chance to keeper Anthony Franken.

In the next 10 minutes, Franken made two blinding saves from close range attacks, pushing the ball one-handed to block drives by Sterjovski and David Barrett.

Against the run of play, Perth gained a free kick 25 metres from the goal where Boutsianis swerved the ball off the post and into the back of the net for his fifth scoring shot from a dead ball situation this season.

Perth came out with

renewed vigour in the second half and won its first corner of the game four minutes after play resumed.

"We played like a youth team in the first half and there was a big thunderstorm from me in the dressing room during the halftime break," said Perth coach Bernd Stange.

"In the first half, we were not good because the defence panicked and committed errors but improved greatly in the second half."

The Boutsianis goal sparked Perth into an attacking mode which had been missing in the first session and they drew level 12 minutes into the new stanza when Alistair Edwards put away a 15-metre volley.

Perth snatched the lead

for the first time in the 65th minute when Boutsianis got behind the defence and a four-player passing movement ended with Robert Trajkovski scoring from close range.

One minute later, the scores were again level when Nathan Day broke free on the right and

his pin-point cross was touched into the net by the waiting Steve Berry.

Referee Jeremy Blaney was forced to take quick action when a scuffle between Perth's Danny Hay and Sydney's Jacob Burns ended in punches and dismissed both players from the field.

With both teams making

substitutions to counter the extreme heat and humidity, the game seemed headed towards a draw until the final minute. Substitute Vas Kalođeracos chased the ball almost to the United line and pushed a deep cross from the left over the goal area to the waiting Boutsianis.



Con Boutsianis: his deadly free kick kept Perth in the game in the first half

Falcons disallowed two as Wilson slams winner

AN 85th minute goal by Mark Wilson gave the Newcastle Breakers three valuable points against the Gippsland Falcons in their national soccer league encounter on Sunday night.

The goal was the result of a speculative shot by Wilson and an unfortunate misjudgement by the Gippsland keeper Bojo Jevdevic, who missed the bounce.

The luckless Falcons had two injury time goals disallowed for infringements on Newcastle goalkeeper Bob Catlin.

In the first half the Gippslanders had total command, in fact the Falcons did everything except find an avenue for goal.

Shane Pryce was devastating in defence for the visitors who had no choice but to play defensive football.

GIPPSLAND FALCONS 0
NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 1 (M Wilson)
Venue: Mobil Park
Man of the Match: Shane Pryce NEWC

In the first half they managed one solitary shot at goal struck by John Bonavoglia while Catlin's goal was constantly peppered by the Gippslanders.

In the second half the game opened up with the visitors now taking the initiative, but with even fewer strikes at goal.

Newcastle coach Lee Sterrey said he was disappointed with the football played by his team but was happy with the three points.

"Travelling to Gippsland is always a difficult road and we are happy to win

down here," he said.

"Maybe we were a little defensive but our objective was to block out the Gippsland attackers particularly Perinovich."

Gippsland coach Stuart Munro was obviously disappointed that his team was unable to finish the actions particularly in the first half.

"The teenagers (referring to the young brigade that replaced suspended players Will Hastie, Brian MacNicol and Clayton Bell) played extremely well with Ben Cassar terrific," said Munro.

"He keeps learning, enjoying it and we predict a big future for him."

"Our goalkeeper cost us the game in the end."

"That together with three poor refereeing decisions."

"The Falcons must learn to win games again."

"We cannot afford to make mistakes."

ERICSSON CUP SOCCER



Ericsson Cup Round 22: 26-28 February

Friday 26 February

Newcastle Breakers v Adelaide Sharks
Breakers Stadium 7.30pm

Saturday 27 February

Brisbane Strikers v Melbourne Knights
Suncorp Stadium 7.00pm
Marconi Fairfield v Gippsland Falcons
Marconi Stadium 7.00pm

Sunday 28 February

Wollongong Wolves v Northern Spirit
Brandon Park 6.30pm
Perth Glory v Canberra Cosmos
Perth Oval 4.00pm
Sydney Olympic v South Melbourne
Belmore Sportsground 6.30pm
Carlton v Sydney United
Optus Oval 5.00pm***

Bye: Adelaide City

*** denotes ABC Match of the Round

NOTE: all information believed correct at time of going to press. Please check with daily press, your club or Soccer Australia for changes to scheduled kick offs.

ASF (02) 9380 6099, Adelaide City (08) 8336 9077, Adelaide Sharks (08) 8351 9866, Brisbane Strikers (07) 3252 5327, Carlton (03) 9389 6213, Canberra Cosmos (02) 6281 7981, Gippsland Falcons (03) 5134 5529, Marconi Fairfield (02) 9823 2222, Melbourne Knights (03) 9699 4188, Newcastle Breakers (02) 4951 2722, Northern Spirit (02) 9460 2187, Perth Glory (08) 9383 9911, South Melbourne (03) 9645 9797, Sydney Olympic (02) 9558 5355, Sydney United (02) 9823 6418, Wollongong City (02) 4226 3988

Inside Soccer's TRIVIA MOMENTS
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WHO WAS Gippsland (Morwell)
Falcons first NSL coach?

ANSWER: see Ram Scoreboard, p30.

THOMPSON just brilliant!

By Paul Millar

CARLTON new boy Archie Thompson smashed home four goals against a desperate Brisbane here tonight to edge his national soccer league side back into play-off contention with the 5-2 result making it a tough run home for the Strikers.

Thompson took the bows and Carlton took the points, but Brisbane was in this game until the final 11 minutes before being swamped by the home side.

Brisbane was reduced to 10 men just before halftime, missed a penalty just after the break and showed plenty of pluck but lacked a finisher like Thompson.

Thompson is hardly on first name terms with his team-mates after crossing

from Gippsland a fortnight ago, but they all wanted to know him today after the quartet.

He slammed in the opener in six minutes after Clint Bolton spilled a Lupo Lapsansky drive, made it 2-0 with a deft header on 45 minutes, snapped onto a loose ball at 79 minutes to make it 3-2 and headed home in injury time for 4-2.

Marcus Stergiopoulos finished the scoring at 5-2 while Des Hughes notched just before half-time to put Brisbane in the hunt at 2-1, Jeromy Harris levelled at 64 minutes, but the Strikers just

collapsed late in the game.

Carlton coach Eddie Krncevic said the \$40,000 his club had paid the Falcons for Thompson was money well spent.

"All credit to Archie, four goals, what an effort, our forty grand's well spent, ten grand for each goal, but all in all we're just happy to get the three points today," Krncevic said.

In the other change rooms, Brisbane coach John Kosmina was seething at Chris Zoricich's send-off by referee Brett Hugo at 45 minutes for a

late tackle, but he had been booked only minutes earlier for a similar offence.

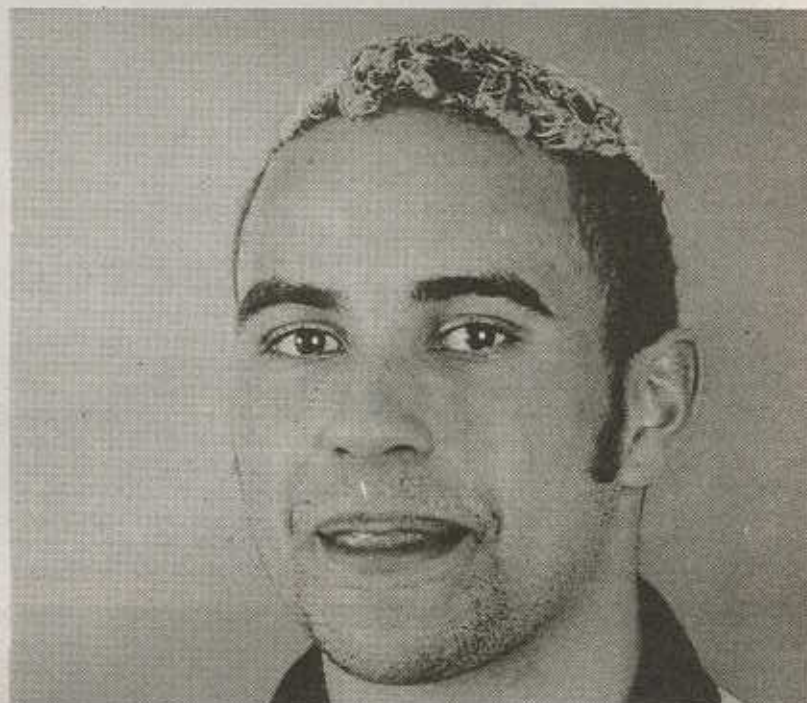
Kosmina said he should never have been sent for an early shower.

"No way, but then Brett Ego is renowned for it, isn't he?"

"Is it Ego or Hugo," Kosmina said.

The match was a roller-coaster before Carlton steam-rolled home and the result could have been so different if stand in skipper Casey Wehrman converted a penalty in the 59th minute.

Adrian Cagalj con-



ceded a penalty with the score at 2-1 with a foul in the area but the goalkeeper redeemed

himself by blocking Wehrman's spot kick.

The victory was a real bonus for Carlton's new

owners who were expected to officially take hold of the club within the next few days.

CARLTON 5 (Thompson4, Stergiopoulos)
BRISBANE STRIKERS 2 (Hughes, Harris)
Venue: Optus Oval
Man of the Match: Archie Thompson CARL

8-goal thriller at Hindmarsh

By Sam Lienert

A PENALTY goal to Wollongong substitute Steve Karavatakis about two minutes from fulltime gave his side a 4-4 away draw with Adelaide City in an entertaining NSL match at Hindmarsh Stadium on Sunday night.

The Wolves seemed headed for victory against the much higher-ranked City, leading 3-1 at half-time with forward Scott Chipperfield heading the charge.

Chipperfield was in sparkling form, combining with fellow forwards Antony Surjan and Esala Masi to dominate the first half.

City opened the scoring in the 14th minute when Carl Veart tipped in a goal from point blank range after striker Damian Mori had headed the ball over keeper Leslie Pogliacconi.

The Wolves defence looked unsettled and loose in the opening minutes but grew in confidence after Chipperfield set up their opening goal three minutes later.

He took on the Adelaide defence before being brought down with an illegal tackle by Angelo Costanzo in the penalty area and Surjan easily levelled with the resulting

ADELAIDE CITY 4 (Mori 2, Veart 2)
WOLLONGONG CITY 4 (Surjan, Horsley, Chipperfield, Karavatakis)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Man of the Match: Scott Chipperfield WOLL

penalty kick.

The fast Wollongong forwards continually exposed Adelaide's defence for pace on the counter-attack and Chipperfield set Matthew Horsley up for his side's second goal just seven minutes later.

He made another skilful move into the left side of the penalty area, drawing defenders towards him then crossing the ball to an unguarded Horsley, who converted from two metres out.

Adelaide coach Zoran Matic tried to lift his side by bringing substitute Bradley Armour onto the field to replace Bradley Hassell but Wollongong responded by scoring its third goal almost immediately.

Chipperfield put his own name on the scoresheet with a brilliant solo run, starting about 40 metres from goal and taking on four defenders to score with a firmly struck 15-metre left-footer.

City came out after half-time with far greater urgency and began to dominate possession through the midfield - Costanzo and Dong-ki Kim

providing Mori and Veart with plenty of chances.

Mori struck the bottom of the crossbar with a fierce left-footer that would have given the keeper no chance in the opening minutes of the half before eventually converting midway through the half from an almost identical spot to bring the score back to 3-2.

Spurred on by a large home crowd, Adelaide continued to press hard and was rewarded when Veart and Mori both scored again in a three-minute burst to give their side a 4-3 lead late in the match.

But Wollongong came back to level the score through Karavatakis penalty against the flow of play.

In a dramatic finale, Wollongong's Michael Brooks had beaten the keeper and struck at goal but Costanzo used his hands in a desperate diving attempt to stop the ball and gave away the subsequently converted penalty.

Matic said his players had been lazy in the first half and cost themselves an important win.

"Who wants to be a coach?"

It is not good enough to play 35 minutes and win the game, no team can afford that," Matic said.

"Even that wasn't that brilliant, it was just pressure on them and we forced the goals.

I wouldn't care if we lost five-nil but they have got to give their full effort.

"But I don't need to comment, you could see it for yourself out on the field."



Carl Veart: got two out of the eight goal total at Hindmarsh

Blues exploit lack of Marconi tall timber

By Alan Clark

SOUTH Melbourne stretched its lead at the top of the table for the second week in a row, defeating Top Six aspirants Marconi 2-0 at Bob Jane Stadium on Sunday.

The win means South is the only team to hold an undefeated home record this campaign, providing a strong base upon which to build a second Championship attempt.

In a round where the goals were a penny a dozen, all it took was for South to net twice in the opening 36 minutes and then soak up Marconi pressure from then on.

The two goals had arisen in similar circumstances.

South coach Ange Postecoglou had counted on absences in Marconi's usual defence meaning not only would there be an unfamiliar defensive combination, it was giving away centimetres in height if South's tall defenders could be brought into the attack.

After ten minutes the plan was evident.

Steve Panopoulos sent in a long cross teasing Ante Covic into attempting a punch.

Covic missed, leaving his goal then exposed as Nick Orlic headed narrowly over.

The lesson wasn't learnt, and seven minutes later the presence of Con Blatsis and Nick Orlic up for a corner was enough for Panopoulos' corner to be headed on by Vaughan Coveny to where Paul Trimboli awaited and gleefully headed home.

Marconi coach Frank Farina acknowledged the ploy after the game saying: "I think Ange (Postecoglou) exploited it quite well.

"We didn't have a real lot of height at the back.

"Since losing Babic and

**SOUTH MELBOURNE 2 (Trimboli, Coveny)
MARCONI FAIRFIELD 0
Venue: Bob Jane Stadium
Man of the Match: Nick Orlic SMEL**

Longo, our two centre-halves, it takes a lot of our height away, and we struggled.

"(South) troubled us from nearly every set-piece that they had."

Francis Awaritefe made a return to one of the clubs on his playing resume, and was involved in most Marconi thrusts of substance.

He celebrated his return with a strong challenge on South's keeper Jason Petkovic mid-way through the half that threatened to develop into a nasty incident involving players of both sides, but the impressive Mark Shield was quickly in to settle ruffled tempers.

Corners and set-pieces were always likely to be the undoing of Marconi, and the defensive panic was palpable.

Michael Curcija had a goal disallowed as he swept the ball into the net from a corner - the referee seeing Covic had been hindered.

But the second was not long coming.

Blatsis had again linked up with the attack, carrying the ball wide down the right before launching a far-post cross that completely cut out the defenders, perfectly falling for Coveny to head goalwards.

Marconi's first attempt for the half took until the 40th minute when Vlado Zoric struck a screamer from distance but watched it go over.

Just before the half ended, a South corner again caused havoc being scrambled clear after it looked certain to result in the third.

Blatsis' involvement in the

game ceased suddenly just before the half ended when it looked like he suffered a recurrence of his hamstring injury which caused him to miss much of the first part of the season.

South's depth was to be tested once again.

The second period was dissatisfying for the large crowd, as South was content to soak up the pressure and hit on the break.

Robbie Hooker had been substituted and Marconi had dispensed with a sweeper, bringing on an extra midfielder.

"We were 2-0 down, and I decided that we'd go with a different line-up," said Farina.

"It was just a tactical thing and Robbie was the one who had to make way."

Marconi was allowed back into the game, even if penetration was still beyond them.

Marcus Phillips had the most noteworthy effort with a 35 metre shot which flew just wide of Petkovic's right post.

Just before the game concluded, 99-game Jason Polak - who had come on for captain Paul Trimboli with ten minutes remaining - had found himself through on Covic after Coveny's flick-header had split the Marconi defence.

Polak was unable to convert as Covic raced out to block.

"We knew that they'd come here and throw everything at us, so it was a bit of a danger game for us," said Postecoglou.

"We won the game in the first 45 minutes.

"But if we were a little bit



Paul Trimboli: got opener for South Melbourne against Marconi

smarter in the second half we could have capitalised, and maybe got another goal or two.

"But I can't complain."

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NEW SOUTH WALES

SUPER LEAGUE: First Grade, Round 3

Saturday February 20

Bankstown City 2 Sutherland Sharks 0
Cleary 28, 58

Bonnyrigg W Eagles 4 Parramatta Eagles 1
Richardson 55 Bard 46
Macino 20, 23
Luff 8

Sunday February 21

Bankstown City Lions 3 Fairfield Bulls 1
Hawrysuik 55 Driene 20
Issa 67
Adioski 88

Ryde City 2 Eastern Suburbs 2
Ollerenshaw 75, 88 Pulicino 6, 47

Leichhardt Tigers 2 Macarthur Rams 3
Talcevski 65 Lloyd 40
Landsdowne Whidett 50
Macerola 70

Canterbury M'ville 2 Central Coast 2
Nikas 25, 85 Preston 31
Byrn 62

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Macarthur Rams	3	3	0	0	10	5	9
Blacktown City	3	2	0	1	6	3	6
Bankstown City	3	2	0	1	9	8	6
Canterbury	3	1	2	0	8	4	5
Bonnyrigg W Eagles	3	1	1	1	8	4	4
Fairfield Bulls	3	1	1	1	6	4	4
Leichhardt Tigers	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Central Coast	3	1	1	1	5	7	4
Parramatta Eagles	3	1	1	1	3	5	4
Ryde City	3	0	1	2	4	7	1
Eastern Suburbs	3	0	1	2	3	6	1
Sutherland Sharks	3	0	1	2	2	5	1

SUPER LEAGUE: Under 21, Round 3

Saturday February 20

Bankstown City 4 Sutherland Sharks 0
Bonnyrigg Eagles 2 Parramatta Eagles 0

Sunday February 21

Bankstown City Lions 0 Fairfield Bulls 2
Ryde City 1 Eastern Suburbs 3
Leichhardt Tigers 0 Macarthur Rams 3
Canterbury M'ville 3 Central Coast 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Macarthur Rams	3	3	0	0	8	1	9
Bonnyrigg WE	3	3	0	0	7	0	9
Blacktown City	3	2	0	1	7	4	6
Fairfield Bulls	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
Eastern Suburbs	3	2	0	1	5	4	6
Canterbury Marrickville	3	1	1	1	5	4	4
Central Coast	3	1	1	1	5	4	4
Parramatta Eagles	3	1	1	1	5	6	4
Sutherland Sharks	3	1	0	2	4	8	1
Leichhardt Tigers	3	0	1	2	4	8	1
Ryde City	3	0	0	3	3	7	0
Bankstown City Lions	3	0	0	3	0	8	0

SUPER LEAGUE: Under 18, Round 3

Saturday February 20

Bankstown City 3 Sutherland Sharks 0
Bonnyrigg W Eagles 1 Parramatta Eagles 1

Sunday February 21

Bankstown City Lions 3 Fairfield Bulls 0
Ryde City 3 Eastern Suburbs 2
Leichhardt Tigers 0 Macarthur Rams 2
Canterbury M'ville 4 Central Coast 2

ERICSSON CUP 1998/99

	home						away					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A
1 South Melbourne	20	9	1	0	23	8	4	3	3	16	13	43
2 Perth Glory	20	6	1	3	21	9	5	2	3	22	15	36
3 Sydney United	20	7	2	2	23	11	4	1	5	12	15	36
4 Northern Spirit	20	6	2	2	14	7	5	0	5	13	19	35
5 Adelaide City	20	7	3	1	25	9	3	1	5	10	11	34
6 Carlton	20	7	2	1	28	9	2	2	6	12	20	31
7 Sydney Olympic	19	8	1	1	24	8	1	3	5	9	17	31
8 Brisbane Strikers	19	5	3	2	18	12	3	1	5	11	19	28
9 Marconi Fairfield	19	5	1	2	19	12	3	2	6	12	24	27
10 Newcastle Breakers	20	4	3	3	12	11	2	2	6	7	15	26
11 Wollongong City	19	3	4	2	17	11	2	2	6	12	24	21
12 Adelaide Sharks	19	4	4	2	19	13	2	1	6	8	18	20
13 Gippsland Falcons	19	3	2	5	6	13	1	3	5	6	19	17
14 Melbourne Knights	19	2	2	6	13	16	2	2	5	9	17	16
15 Canberra Cosmos	19	2	0	8	8	18	0	2	7	6	18	8

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Canterbury Marrickville	3	3	0	0	12	5	9
Bankstown City	3	2	0	1	9	5	6
Macarthur Rams	3	2	0	1	5	2	6
Ryde City	3	2	0	1	5	4	6
Leichhardt Tigers	3	2	0	1	3	3	6
Parramatta Eagles	3	1	1	1	3	2	4
Blacktown City	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Bonnyrigg	3	1	1	1	5	6	4
Central Coast	3	1	0	2	5	6	3
Sutherland Sharks	3	1	0	2	3	8	3
Eastern Suburbs	3	0	1	2	4	6	1
Fairfield Bulls	3	0	0	3	1	8	0

VICTORIA

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE: Round 3
Monday 15 February

Bulleen Inter Kings 2 Springvale Eagles 2
Westvale 0 South Dandenong 2

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE: Rd 4

St Albans Saints 2 Preston Lions 1
Port Melbourne Sharks 5 Altona Magic 0
South Dandenong 1 Fawkner Blues 1
Springvale White Eagles 1 Westvale 1
Bulleen Inter Kings 3 Sunshine Georgies 0
Melbourne Raiders 4 Altona East 0
Green Gully Cavaliers v Bentleigh Greens (playing Monday)

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE: Round 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Pt. Melbourne	3	3	0	0	10	2	9
Bentleigh Greens	3	2	1	0	9	1	7
Green Gully	3	2	1	0	7	5	7
Preston Lions	3	2	0	1	6	2	6
Altona East	3	2	0	1	4	4	6
Bulleen	3	1	2	0	5	4	5
Melbourne Raiders	3	1	2	0	4	3	5
South Dandenong	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Fawkner Blues	3	1	0	2	7	6	3
Sunshine Georgies	3	1	0	2	3	5	3
St. Albans	3	1	0	2	3	7	3
Westvale	3	0	1	2	4	11	1
Spring. White Eagles	3	0	0	3	2	6	0
Altona Magic	3	0	0	3	1	10	0

VICTORIAN PREMIER RESERVES: Round 3

Monday 15 February
Bulleen Inter Kings 7 Springvale Eagles 0
Westvale 2 South Dandenong 2

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

Northern Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
AIS	18	12	5	1	71	12	41
Sydney Olympic	18	12	2	4	48	20	38
Northern Spirit	18	11	2	5	32	17	35
Newcastle Breakers	18	11	4	3	38	18	37
Marconi Fairfield	15	9	5	1	46	12	32
QAS	17	11	1	5	50	21	34
Wollongong Wolves	16	10	1	5	34	16	31
NSWIS	16	10	3	3	39	12	33
Sydney United	18	7	4	7	33	27	25
Marconi Fairfield Colts	18	5	3	10	16	30	18
ACTAS	18	4	2	12	26	44	14
Sydney United Colts	17	4	0	13	18	51	12
Northern Spirit Colts	17	2	3	12	16	72	9
Sydney Olympic Academy	18	1	3	14	13	59	6
Wollongong Wolves Colts	18	1	2	15	10	79	5

Southern Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
South Melbourne	16	10	3	3	29	15	33
Carlton	14	9	2	3	41	16	29
VIS	14	8	3	3	28	21	27
Gippsland Falcons	15	6	2	7	23	24	20
Melbourne Knights	15	5	3	7	26	29	18
Bulleen Inter Kings	14	5	2	7	19	24	17
Albury Wodonga	14	0	1	13	14	51	1

VICTORIAN PREMIER RESERVES: Round 4

St Albans Saints 4 Preston Lions 0;
Port Melbourne Sharks 2 Altona Magic 0
South Dandenong 2 Fawkner Blues 0
Westvale 5 Springvale Eagles 1
Bulleen Inter Kings 2 Sunshine Georgies 0
Melbourne Raiders 4 Altona East 1
Green Gully Cavaliers v Bentleigh Greens (playing Monday)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
St Albans	3	3	0	0	11	3	9
Preston Lions	3	2	1	0	11	3	7
Bulleen Inter Kings	3	2	0	0	9	3	6
Green Gully	3	2	0	1	10	8	6
Bentleigh	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Altona Magic	3	1	1	1	6	6	4
Sunshine	3	1	1	1	6	7	4
Melbourne Raiders	3	1	1	1	4	5	4

Westvale	2	1	0	1	4	3	3
Fawkner	3	1	0	2	6	7	3
Port Melbourne	3	0	2	1	4	6	2
Springvale	2	0	1	1	3	7	1
South Dandenong	2	0	0	2	3	9	0
Altona East	3	0	0	3	4	15	0

Powerade Youth League semi-finals:

Springvale City 4 Preston Lions 0
Carlton 2 South Melbourne 1

AWSA National League

Saturday 20 February
SASI Pirates 5 NSW Horizon 0
Halfpenny 5



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2. Les Scheinflug v North Korea, 1965
3. Hakoah Eastern Suburbs (later Sydney City)

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QAS Sting 1
Bond

NSWIS Sapphires 2
Cavanagh
Slayter

Sunday 21 February
SASI Pirates 2
Bisby
Black

NNSW Horizon 1
Forman

QAS Sting 1
Ferguson

NSWIS Sapphires 1
Peters

FINAL TABLE	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Canberra Eclipse	16	9	3	4	32	25	30
SASI Pirates	16	8	4	4	29	11	28
NSWIS Sapphires	16	7	6	3	24	13	27
QAS Sting	16	5	3	8	26	30	18
Northern NSW Horizon	16	2	2	12	16	48	8

QUEENSLAND

QUEENSLAND PREMIER LEAGUE: Round 1
Saturday 20 February

Mt Gravatt 1
Wynnum 1
Rosedale Rovers 1

Gold Coast 1
Bundaberg Waves 2
Brisbane Lions 2

Sunday 21 February
Taringa Rovers 1
Toowoomba United 0

Brisbane City 2
Ipswich Knights 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Ipswich Knights	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Brisbane City	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Brisbane Lions	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Bundaberg Waves	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Gold Coast	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Mount Gravatt	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Rosedale Rovers	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Taringa Rovers	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Wynnum	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Toowoomba United	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

ILLAWARRA

CORRIMAL LEAGUES CLUB CUP: Round 1
Sunday 14 February

GROUP A
Balgownie Rangers 0
Bulli 3
Helensburgh Thistle 0
Port Kembla 2

Barbarians 1
Illawarra United 1
South Coast United 2
Bellambi 0

GROUP B
Wollongong Olympic 1
Conston Lions 8
Western Suburbs 2
Picton Rangers 2

Albion Park 0
Aborigines 0
Dapto 1
Tarrawanna 1

GROUP C
Kemblawarra 4
Highlands United 0
Shellharbour City 2
Fernhill 2

Corrimal Leagues 0
Woonona 0
Wollongong W Eagles 2
Berkely 0

GROUP D
Lysaghts 3
Wollongong Amateurs 0
Shoalhaven City 0
Northern United 4

Kiama 0
Cringila Lions 1
University 0
Warilla Wanderers 1

CORRIMAL LEAGUES CLUB CUP: Round 2
Sunday 21 February

GROUP A
Helensburgh Thistle 3
South Coast United 1
Illawarra United 1
Barbarians 0

Bellambi 1
Port Kembla 4
Balgownie Rangers 4
Bulli 3

GROUP B
Aborigines 0
Dapto 0
Albion Park 1
Coniston Lions 2

Tarrawanna 3
Wollongong Olympic 5
Western Suburbs 1
Picton Rangers 0

GROUP C
Shellharbour City 2
Kemblawarra 3
Corrimal Leagues Club 0
Wollongong W Eagles 3

Berkeley 0
Highlands United 0
Woonona 2
Fernhill 1

GROUP

University 2
Kiama 0
Lysaghts 4
Shoalhaven City 1

Warilla Wanderers 0
Cringila Lions 0
Wollongong Amateurs 1
Northern United 4

NAT. YOUTH LEAGUE

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

NSWIS 3
Simon Catanzaro
Noel Arrarte
Anthony Doumanis

Northern Spirit 0

AIS 3
Elias Dimourtzidis 2
Joshua Kennedy

Wollongong Wolves 1
Chad Bishop

Newcastle Breakers 3
Paul Wheeler 2
Saoud Umlil

NSWIS 0

AIS 4
Ljubo Milicevic
John Cvetanovski
Kevo Gulesserian
Elias Dimourtzidis

Queensland Academy 0

Wollongong Colts 3
Tanayatis Tzolikidis
Saso Popovski
Nathan Broad
Newcastle Breakers 4
Tony Bauer
Paul Wheeler
Josh Maguire
Peter Juchniewicz

ACTAS 3
Matthew Julianne
Goran Velianovski
Daniel Raad
Northern Spirit Colts 0

Sydney United 4
Greg Collins 2
Daniel Kukucka
Josip Moric

Sydney United Colts 0

Marconi Fairfield Colts 3
Wollongong 3

ERICSSON CUP

Ericsson Cup Round 21

Saturday 20 February
Melbourne Knights 2
Kelic 38
Kutlesovski 77

Northern Spirit 3
Watkins 33
Arnold 46
Slater 77

Venue: Knights Stadium
Crowd: 3,728
Referee: L Prospero

Sunday 21 February

Adelaide City 4
Veart 13, 81
Mori 70, 86

Wollongong City 4
Surjan 15
Horsley 24
Chipperfield 36
Karavakis 43

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Crowd: 4,546
Referee: G Connolly

Carlton 5
Thompson 7, 46, 79, 93
Stergiopoulos 95
Venue: Optus Oval
Crowd: 2,502
Referee: B Hugo

Brisbane Strikers 2
Hughes 49
Harris 63

South Melbourne 2
Trimboli 16
Coveny 35
Venue: Bob Jane Stadium
Crowd: 9,145
Referee: M Shield

Marconi Fairfield 0

Gippsland Falcons 0
Venue: Mobil Park
Crowd: 1,735
Referee: C Diomis
GIPS:

Newcastle Breakers 1
M Wilson 81

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Marconi Fairfield 9
Luke Tomich 3
Joe Bruni 3
Michael Beauchamp
Mark Hagger
own goal

Olympic Academy 0

Southern Division
South Melbourne 2
Andrew Mashoian
Erhan Bayraktar

Albury Wodonga 0

Carlton 2
Alex Josifovski
Deniz Ekici

Gippsland 1
Tony Pardo

Melbourne Knights 3
Michael Bosevski
Hrvoje Matkovic
Damon Collina

VIS 2
Angelo Mtsiopoulos
Scott McDonald

Sydney United 3
Vrkic 16
Sterjovski 23
Berry 64
Venue: Edensor Park
Crowd: 4,211
Rederee: Blaney

Perth Glory 4
Boutsianis 38, 87
Edwards 55
Garcia 63

Canberra Cosmos v Sydney Olympic (Played Monday)
BYE: Adelaide Sharks

Leading Ericsson Cup Scorers

17 Pablo CARDOZO (SOLY)
12 Damian MORI (ADL)
11 Vaughan COVENY (SMEL)
11 John MARKOVSKI (PRTH)

11 Alex MOREIRA (CARL)
11 Mile STERJOVSKI (SUTD)
9 Michael CURCIJA (SMEL)
8 Peter BULJAN (CANB)
8 Ivan KELIC (MELK)
8 Archie THOMPSON (CARL, +4 GIPS)
7 Con BOUTSIANIS (PRTH)
7 Derek POIMER (ADSH)
7 Brad MALONEY (MARC)
7 Kresimir MARUSIC (SPRT)
6 Francis AWARITEFE (MARC)
6 Bobby DESPOTOVSKI (PRTH)
6 John GIBSON (ADSH)
6 Joel GRIFFITHS (SUTD)
6 Brad HASSELL (ADLC)
6 Robbie SLATER (SPRT)
6 Joe TRICARICO (CARL)
5 John ANASTASIADIS (SMEL)
5 Jeromy HARRIS (BRIS)
5 Sasho PETROVSKI (WOLL)
5 Kris TRAJANOVSKI (MARC)
4 Marco BRESCEANO (CARL)
4 Simon COLOSIMO (CARL)
4 Alex DURIC (ADSH)
4 Matt HORSLEY (WOLL)
4 Norman TOME (SOLY)
4 Sang-Choi YOON (NEWC)
4 Ray YOUNIS (WOLL)
3 Walter ARDONE (SUTD)
3 Graham ARNOLD (SPRT)
3 Zeljko BABIC (MARC)
3 John BUONAVOGLIA (NEWC)
3 Michael GARCIA (PRTH)
3 Troy HALPIN (PRTH)
3 Des HUGHES (BRIS)
3 Chris KALANTZIS (SOLY)
3 Vas KALOGERACOS (PRTH)
3 Harry KARL (MELK)
3 Lubo LAPSAANSKY (CARL)
3 Stephen LAYBUTT (BRIS)
3 Goran LOZANOVSKI (SMEL)
3 Stuart McLAREN (BRIS)
3 Dino MENNILLO (ADLC)
3 Scott MILLER (PRTH)
3 Greg OWENS (NEWC)
3 Reece TOLLENAERE (BRIS)
3 Paul TRIMBOLI (SMEL)
3 Carl VEART (ADLC)
3 Daniel WATKINS (SPRT)

2 Elias AUGERINOS (SOLY)
2 Tansel BASER (SMEL)
2 Paul BILOKAPIC (SPRT)
2 Michael BROOKS (WOLL)
2 Christian CARE (MARC)
2 David CERVINSKI (MELK)
2 Scott CHIPPERFIELD (WOLL)
2 Sean CRANNEY (BRIS)
2 Alistair EDWARDS (PRTH)
2 Brett EMERTON (SOLY)
2 Chad GIBSON (MARC)
2 Chay HEWS (BRIS)
2 Ante JURIC (SOLY)
2 Dongi Ki KIM (ADLC)
2 Pan KIM (MARC)
2 Brian MacNICOL (GIPS)
2 Andrew MARTH (CARL)
2 Levent OSMAN (GIPS)
2 Jason POLAK (SMEL)
2 Joel PORTER (ADSH)
2 Shane PRYCE (NEWC)
2 Paul REID (WOLL)
2 Mark RUDAN (SPRT)
2 Michael SANTALAB (SUTD)
2 Mike SMITH (MARC)
2 Anthony SURJAN (WOLL)
2 Zelko SUSA (MELK)
2 Dino TERMINELLO (ADLC)
2 Hamilton THORPE (ADSH)
2 Danny VIDA KOVIC (ADSH)
2 Andy VLAHOS (CARL)
2 Kasey WEHRMAN (BRIS)
2 Mark WILSON (NEWC)
2 Chris ZORICICH (BRIS)
1 Richie ALAGICH (ADSH)
1 Corey ARTONE (ADSH)
1 Ransford BANINI (MELK)
1 David BARRETT (SUTD)
1 Sasho BECVINOVSKI (GIPS)
1 Clayton BELL (GIPS)
1 Peter BENNETT (SUTD)
1 Steve BERRY (SUTD)
1 Vinko BULJUBASIC (PRTH)
1 Jacob BURNS (SUTD)
1 Nick CARLE (OLY)
1 Joe CALETA (SUTD)
1 Alvin CECCOLI (WOLL)
1 Adrian CERVINSKI (SOLY)
1 G Circati (PRTH)
1 David CLARKON (SMEL)

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RAM

	MERINO	MATCH			\$55.95
	CROMARK	MATCH		\$37.75	\$44.90
	RYELAND	MATCH			\$30.55
	RYELAND	MATCH		\$27.40	\$27.40
	DORSET	TRAINING	\$20.75	\$20.75	\$20.75
	CORMOR	TRAINING	\$16.95	\$16.95	\$16.95

REAL

	MONDIAL		\$67.50		
	ESPANA		\$48.95		
	MEXICO		\$42.90	\$42.90	
	NAPOLI		\$26.90	\$26.90	
	SANTOS 18P		\$19.95	\$19.95	\$19.95
	SANTOS 32P		\$19.95	\$19.95	\$19.95
	ROMA		\$16.50	\$16.50	\$16.50

BALLS NOT LICENSED FOR NSW SF OFFICIAL MATCHES

KOS

	EUROPA		\$21.95	\$21.95	
	COMPETITION		\$14.35	\$14.35	\$14.35
	STRIKER		\$13.65	\$13.65	\$13.65
	MAJESTIC		\$12.90	\$12.90	\$12.90
	CLASSIQUE		\$11.35	\$11.35	\$11.35
	TIANGO		\$10.70	\$10.70	\$10.70

ADIDAS

PUMA

	TRICOLORE				\$25.00
	CELLERATOR				\$65.00
	KING				\$65.00
	KING TRAINING				\$32.95
	SOCCER				\$20.95
	SOCCER				\$19.75
	SOCCER				\$18.95

**SPORTS FACTORY BALLS
ARE ALSO THE CHEAPEST ON THE MARKET TODAY**